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Special Issue on:
Racism, Multiculturalism and Globalization

Heribert Adam: Anti-Semitism and Apartheid
Stephen J. Sniegoski: Lester Frank Ward
Dick Pels: Strange Standpoints
John Michael: Making a Stand
Claude Karnoouh: Is the Problem Drugs or Society?
Alain de Benoist: Confronting Globalization

Notes and Commentary:
Wayne A. Hunt: The First Peoples and Quebec
Sonia Combe: Today's French Historical Research

Reviews:
Catherine Pickstock: Capitalism or Secularism?
Mark Wegierski: On Canadian Conservatism
Hugh Murray: From Communism to "Affirmative Action"
Paul Gottfried: Post-1989 Socialism?

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Introduction: Racism, Multiculturalism and Globalization

"Rational" vs. "Irrational" Racism

Over half a century after the unprecedented atrocities of the Holocaust, there is still no clear understanding of the causes of racism, its logic or what to do about it. Major outbursts of public consternation about the periodic rediscovery by, e.g., Lanzmann's *Shoah* or Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, that many if not most Poles and Germans may have *actually* been racists, betrays the perseverance of the wishful thinking that it was only a matter of a few mad rulers misleading their complacent followers under exceptional geopolitical conditions (such as those of post-Versailles Europe). Within such a Panglossian scenario, all one would have had to do, as was in fact done in WWII, was to forcibly remove the few pathological leaders from their positions of power and all would be well in this, the best of all possible worlds. History, however, refuses to legitimate such a convenient explanation. As a typically "irrational" phenomenon, racism should have gone the way of phlogiston and the ether. Instead, it lingers on to challenge current liberal ideology predicated on irresistible progress, rationality and universal emancipation. Cambodia, Bosnia and Rwanda are only the most recent reminders that Auschwitz may not be a rapidly fading nightmare but the wave of a future increasingly threatened by growing economic imbalances, environmental crises and spiritual impoverishment.

Although trivialized as an individual idiosyncrasy of, e.g., authoritarian personalities, by a liberal democratic establishment still inebriated with self-congratulatory exuberance after the collapse of its former nemesis, racism has increasingly become instrumentalized as a convenient scapegoat for almost all remaining social pathologies by a system in desperate need of a new legitimating ideology after the disappearance of communism. Reduced to a socio-psychological dysfunction, today racism

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(along with structurally symmetrical epiphenomena such as misogyny and homophobia) has become the perfect excuse for the extension of the therapeutic managerial state. As such, it is routinely demonized as the *fons et origo malorum* by a liberal establishment which, notwithstanding its avowed pluralism, seeks to depoliticize all conflicts. As a result, racism becomes the paradigmatic embodiment of that residual irrationalism grounded in superstition and myth which Enlightenment ideology recognizes as the only obstacle preventing the realization of its modernist project. Nothing exemplifies this predicament better than President Clinton's recent pronouncements on the subject. On the one hand, the elimination of all traces of racism is hypostatized as one of the country's top priorities, while on the other, the banality of the proposed remedy, mere dialogue, exposes the cynicism behind the effort to relegitimate a faltering presidency wallowing in corruption and nihilism, by focusing national attention on safe, politically correct decoys.

When all is said and done, notwithstanding, or because of, its ubiquity in everyday political discourse, racism has been turned into a social evil so obvious, despicable and irrational that it has managed to avoid the kind of careful scrutiny it deserves. As Heribert Adam shows in his article on "Anti-Semitism and Racism," however, not every form of racism is equally "irrational" — at least in economic terms. His detailed comparison of Nazi anti-Semitism and South African Apartheid indicates how the terminal irrationalism of the first is incompatible with the underlying economistic rationality of the second. The implication is clear: whereas the latter may be eliminated, at least in its institutional embodiments, through rational considerations and political negotiations, as happened in South Africa, the former remains impervious to such solutions. There was no real alternative to destroying Nazism by military means. That system was so irrational that, as Adam recalls, in crucial phases of WWII it compromised otherwise paramount military objectives in order to exterminate as many Jews as possible.

Worse yet, today the charge of racism is hurled so frequently and carelessly that it has practically lost all meaning. As Hugh Murray shows in his review of Hutchinson's book on the history of American communists' treatment of the race question and its liberal legacy, today any dispute between members of different races automatically becomes suspect of racist overtones. Now the mere voicing of the charge is immediately seen as a politically convenient decoy to divert attention from the real issues. This state of affairs obtains practically everywhere, and here is

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where Adam's analytical distinction may help the most. In separating radically different phenomena now indiscriminately identified as manifestations of racism *sic et nunc* and, through what Leo Strauss called a "*reductio ad Hitlerium*," excluded from rational political analysis, such an account throws considerable light on the dynamics of various manifestations of racism. Thus if, e.g., following Adam's rigorous distinction, the alleged racism of the French National Front, the Italian Northern League or the German Republikaner turns out to be "irrational," then it is non-negotiable and will have to be eliminated by whatever means necessary, within any society committed to equal treatment of all its citizens. If, however, it is of the "rational" variety, as with Apartheid, then it can be readily managed within the present framework of consensus formation as a special case of garden variety "exploitation": its solution would only be a function of renegotiating the existing redistributional system. In addition, the economic subtext of the alleged new forms of "racism" in the West may help explain the political shift not only of the "Reagan democrats" in the 1980s, but also of a substantial sector of the West European working class toward what the Left-liberal establishment stubbornly insists on regarding as a new version of the old Right.

Far from being but another case of political "regression," thus fully in line with predominant liberal illusions concerning the apodicticity of Enlightenment metaphysics and the inexorable unfolding of progress, this shift raises a number of troublesome questions. Could it be that, rather than being "racist," the West European working classes and the Reagan democrats resent the state's homogenizing efforts to reconfigure their alleged "backward" consciousness and the threat to their economic well-being these efforts entail? Is it possible that some of these voters realize that the "politically correct" Left has been taken over by New Class apparatchiks who no longer defend the interests of the working class in pursuing a strategy of indiscriminate social homogenization? If such is the case, is the old Left-Right division now meaningless and obsolete? Could they have seen that the official Left no longer has anything to do with that historical materialism privileging "praxis" as the fundamental dimension of being but, rather, with abstract and typically "bourgeois" ideals of equality and justice?

This is not the first time the working classes have shifted political allegiances when the Left ceased to represent their objective interests and, e.g., became a tool of Soviet foreign policy. Similarly, what they turned to, e.g., fascism, Peronism or even Nazism, had very little to do with what

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the Left, notwithstanding overwhelming evidence to the contrary, insists on classifying as the Right. The casting of 20th century history as a struggle between an emancipatory progressive Left and a monolithic conservative Right is an ideological fraud which has resulted in a systematic distortion not only of past events but of the real nature of current political conflicts as well. Far from constituting yet another instance of Left-liberal theoretical myopia, this insistence on recycling obsolete political categories serves a definite ideological objective: it legitimates as "progressive" and as agents of the Left legacy a New Class of owners of intellectual capital (administrators, professionals and "experts") allegedly functioning as rationalizers and therapists within a structurally perfect society. But this has very little to do with radical working class politics, traditionally committed to qualitative social change to remedy economic inequality.

Thus the demonization of racism and the lack of a systematic analysis of its origins and dynamics has an important political function, which helps explain why finding a definite solution for it has turned out to be so elusive. If it is not a socio-psychological predisposition that can be reasoned out of public life through "honest dialogue," but rather a convenient scapegoat to legitimate an Enlightenment ideology contraposing a politically correct "rationalism" to an allegedly unmanageable "irrationalism," then it is not likely to disappear any time soon. If it did not already exist, something of the kind would have had to be invented. In the US, anti-racism has played exactly the same legitimating role for the predominant managerial ideology as anti-fascism has for the official European Left. The lack of systematic analysis has allowed obsolete ideological categories to occlude new relations of domination and to prevent a redefinition of new political realities.

Rationalism, Enlightenment and Otherness

Heuristically valuable as they may be in helping to clarify a number of current political predicaments, Adam's penetrating insights are articulated in terms of traditional liberal categories and, as such, unable to transcend conventional wisdom. His very deployment of the "rational" and the "irrational" as fundamental analytical categories — a special case of Lukács' reconfiguration in *The Destruction of Reason* of the defining contradiction of the present age — betrays a modernist bias which automatically delegitimates opponents by branding their ideology as "irrational," while automatically hypostatizing the predominant liberal-democratic ethos to the level of absolute truth. Thus, rather than posing

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the question of racism *politically* by recognizing the difference as one obtaining between two systems predicated on divergent sets of myths, the demonization of opponents as "irrational" criminalizes dissidence and depoliticizes conflicts. The opponent ceases to be a legitimate enemy — someone to be confronted as an equal and thus afforded the same dignity one would demand for oneself. Rather, he turns into a despicable foe to be exterminated by whatever means necessary. Liberal depoliticization and the subsequent criminalization of politics, which in the 20th century has led to wars of total annihilation and even genocide, ultimately relegitimates the predominant ideology and its institutional embodiment as a therapeutic managerial state committed to the eradication of the "irrational" and the constitution of a "politically correct" humanity (the citizenry of the brave new world), primarily through education — another ideological placebo popular with the current administration.

The underlying problem remains that the Manichean opposition of a "rational" liberal state vs. an "irrational" racism recycles a tired Enlightenment fairy tale of an archaic, mythical and prescientific world as the source of all Evil being vanquished by Science riding the white steed of Reason. In fact, it is precisely this project of one-dimensional rationalization that causes the problem it pretends to solve. As prefigured in Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* over half a century ago, the root problem of modernity is its inability to deal with particularity and otherness. Far from being the cure, today it is liberalism, as the current manifestation of a reified Enlightenment, which is the actual source of racism in the West. (Of course, in most non-Western cultures, where the dialectic of universality and particularity has not been successfully institutionalized by Roman law and the Catholic Church — two major achievements of Western civilization — racism generally remained the norm rather than the exception). Historically racism emerged in 18th and 19th century Europe as a self-described scientific (i.e., enlightened) account, claiming to provide a biological grounding for imputed social or cultural differences.

Indeed, the rise of racism is part and parcel of the spread of a particular sort of modernist scientistic thinking, deeply hostile to religion and idealism. The paradigm of scientific racism is inseparable from, e.g., the spread of Darwinism and the systematic purge of religion from public life. By attempting to suppress religion and replace it with a vision of humanity reduced to biological objects, the Enlightenment laid the foundation for scientific racism. Worse yet, and more concretely, liberalism is

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implicated in the institutional maintenance of racial classifications. If race relations in the US were framed historically by "the peculiar institution" of slavery, racism today is fuelled by the equally peculiar institution of affirmative action. It is through affirmative action that individuals are identified, labelled and reduced to group membership based on dubious definitions. Liberalism has linked the distribution of certain rewards — admission to educational institutions, government contracts, employment — to racial self-identification which, as Tiger Woods' identity demonstrates, makes little sense in a dynamic and increasingly mixed society. Against populist opinion, the liberal establishment continues to fold, spindle and mutilate individuals and communities by promoting a system of racist categories that would have disappeared long ago were it not for entitlements and the centralized welfare state.

Rationalism and the Welfare State

This project is nothing new. As Stephen J. Sniegoski shows in his reconstruction of Lester Frank Ward's intellectual trajectory at the turn of the century, it is part and parcel of progressivism — something very popular among American intellectuals at the time. Although Ward's work does not seem to have had any direct impact on policy, his ideas were obviously representative of that progressivist thinking which eventually paved the way for the New Deal and the modern welfare state. Hierarchical and centralized, this welfare state gradually marginalized the democratic polity, whose consent became mediatized by a New Class bureaucracy with its own agenda for the reconfiguration of humanity in its own image. The result has been the deployment of that sophisticated strategy of social control through consumerism and clientelism so eloquently described in Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man* over thirty-five years ago — a strategy predicated on the elimination of individuality and the homogenization of the populace not qualitatively different from the one forcibly imposed by those "totalitarian" regimes historically demonized as the implacable enemies of the free world.

What Sniegoski fails to add, however, is that the kind of one-dimensional utopia Ward advocated works only in the cerebrum of alienated intellectuals. Society can be so rationalized only if it has *already* been organized by other means. Worse yet, in carrying out its objectives, this rationality must deploy an identity logic automatically excluding from consideration those informal mechanisms in the lifeworld without which, in the long run, the system cannot effectively reproduce itself. It is well

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known how the Soviet Union finally collapsed after its hyper-rational plans terminally eroded those internal control mechanisms and precipitated a rationality crisis of unprecedented magnitude. While embroiled in the very same logic, liberal democracies have been spared a similar fate by the recalcitrance of their *traditional* social structure, which could not be readily rationalized out of existence by the central bureaucracy. In this sense, social democrats have been saved by their relative impotence and their failure to rationalize as planned.

Contrary to the dark forebodings about brave new worlds and animal farms in the 1940s and 1950s, the constitutional freedoms and strong community traditions which managed to survive in the West allowed market mechanisms to function and real rationalization to take place, resulting in the economic boom of the late 1990s — at least in the US and in those parts of the world still relatively free from bureaucratic stranglehold. Computerization and the deployment of flexible specialization has allowed the reconfiguration of the economic system, despite the planning managers and beyond their wildest expectations, but at steep social and intellectual costs to whatever had become enmeshed in the welfare state. Because of the intellectuals' historical complicity with the state, critical thought has been one of the first victims. Comfortably legitimated as academic apparatchiks after the explosive growth of higher education during the Cold War, American "critical" intellectuals have been caught within the predominant Enlightenment ideology as much as the establishment they criticized primarily for not "rationalizing" fast enough. Thus today, the only vision more bankrupt than the establishment's official worldview is the ideology of most of its former critics.

From Orthodox Marxism to Multiculturalism

Ever since the collapse of social democracy with the nationalist involution of WWI and the subsequent rise of fascism, Marxists have been looking for agencies of social emancipation other than the traditional industrial proletariat, allegedly corrupted by its "aristocratic" involution within the international division of labor. In the 1970s and 1980s, they finally found these agencies in the so-called "new social movements" of women, minorities, gays, etc. As Dick Pels convincingly shows in "Strange Standpoints," however, these new social movements immediately replicated the trajectory of the Marxism of earlier generations — with equally frustrating results. Thus they turned out to be paradigmatic instances of artificial negativity: a pseudo-opposition which feeds into the predominant logic of the system

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and, far from rationalizing it, merely extends its internal irrationality.

Whereas the capitalist logic Marx described as terminal had already been successfully checkmated by the turn of the century with the Bernstein debate concerning the integration of the labor movement within a more inclusive capitalist system, "revolutionary" Marxists stubbornly clung to the obsolete, unilinear theory of history inexorably heading toward revolution, and appointed themselves the guardians of the true faith. With the political role of the labor movement reduced to that of an internal control mechanism to regulate wages and prices, entrepreneurial capitalism was readily rationalized into corporate and finance capitalism, in which the state mediates between competing interest groups, labor being only one of them. At the same time, revolutionary Marxists, i.e., New Class ideologists interested in the labor movement only as a means to realize their ideology of abstract universality, went Leninist and rejected this new social compromise by exacerbating the incommensurability of the "bourgeois" and the "proletarian" standpoints — the mothers of all standpoint epistemologies. Interested only in power, the Stalinist New Class apparatus immediately repressed the best of its "standpoint epistemologists" (Georg Lukács, Karl Korsch, Antonio Gramsci, the Council Communists, *et al.*) when they began to hint that there was no such alternative and that Marxist-Leninist policies had nothing to do with "the proletarian standpoint." In fact, it did not take long to realize that the alleged otherness of Marxism-Leninism ultimately boiled down to another vulgar version of that mechanical materialism typical of bargain basement varieties of the predominant "bourgeois" ideology. Thus, far from having anything to do with qualitative alternatives to the given, Marxism-Leninism turned out to be about the rise to power of marginal New Class intellectuals (whose social mobility was blocked within the existing system of relations of domination) able to successfully instrumentalize the alleged victims of the system to advance their particular cause. It is well known how, long before the collapse of the regime in the USSR (and today in China), Marxism-Leninism had degenerated into a brutal modernizing ideology prefiguring nothing better than a bad carbon copy of the allegedly despised consumerism of capitalist societies.

Pels carefully retraces how the "new social movements" have had a similar Leninist outcome after retreading over all the old long-forgotten internal debates concerning substitutionism, privileged epistemological perspectives, victimology, etc. With the founding of the USSR and the codification of an ideological orthodoxy in the service of the legitimating needs

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of Soviet foreign policy, internal Marxist debate withered, even in the West, in political circles safely out of reach of the KGB. When, in the 1960s, Marxism was taken up once again by the New Left, nothing could be salvaged: if the old ideals — long repressed by Soviet orthodoxy — were provided with a defensible theoretical foundation, they immediately clashed with any kind of Marxist *Realpolitik*. The same seems to have happened with the "new social movements," after the initial political euphoria faded and it came time to provide serious arguments for what turned out to be extravagant claims. When subjected to careful scrutiny, all the grandiose theoretical pronouncements either self-destructed or turned out to be poorly formulated versions of run-of-the-mill academic fare. As for the new *Realpolitik*, once again it was a power grab by a new set of otherwise marginal New Class intellectuals within academia.

Notwithstanding the untenability of their arguments, through various forms of political intimidation of notoriously weak-kneed traditional academics, the various ideologies of these various "new social movements" have succeeded in transmogrifying themselves into academic subdisciplines (such as the various "Gender Studies," "Gay and Lesbian Studies," "Afrocentric Studies," etc.) on the basis of untenable standpoint epistemologies. Allegedly, because of their objectivistic bias and abstract universalism, the various old disciplines of sociology, history, anthropology, etc. were dismissed as inadequate to grasp the particular realities of these groups, thus necessitating the establishment of entirely new disciplines. Yet all these new academic fads are predicated on various versions of "strange standpoints," whose claims, as Pels recounts, have been shown to be unfounded even by some of the more perceptive members of the new social movements themselves, which helps explain why most of the new subdisciplines have developed as ideological safe houses for political indoctrination into new "politically correct" cults, mostly at the taxpayers' expense.

Thus standpoint epistemology is the ultimate ideological justification (and the intellectual Achilles heel) of "new social movements" which, unable to make much of an impact in the outside world, have focused most of their energies within academia, where they have succeeded, but at the cost of reducing already dilapidated ivory towers to intellectual flophouses. What is a standpoint theory of knowledge? As Pels charitably reformulates it, the general claim is that "there exist objectively opposed locations which generate disparate social experiences, which in turn define divergent, partial points of view with variable chances of faithfully

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representing social reality." One need not go much further than this to see through the scam. If these locations can be "objectively" ascertained, and the viewpoints can be equally determined to be "partial," presumably in terms of an impartial perspective whereby it is possible to establish the one-sidedness of the partial, then the various standpoints are ultimately parasitic on the very objectivity they pretend to attack and there is nothing in their claims which has not been accepted by all academic disciplines since universities were first established or people began bickering about philosophical matters in the Athenian marketplace. But if the various viewpoints do in fact generate incommensurable conceptual systems, then one has to give up the notion that the determination of these particular locations can be "objectively" established and, therefore, that the knowledge so generated is "partial."

As John Michael adds in his comments on Pels' account, even if a partial viewpoint could establish its partiality without recourse to an impartial, objective criteria, whatever knowledge is so generated can never aspire to be truer than any other knowledge generated from other viewpoints. In the most extreme case, the very meaning of the concepts used to formulate such truth would be self-referential and consequently incommunicable to anyone not already sharing a similar viewpoint. If all knowledge is "inescapably position-bound . . . partial and partisan," then the various standpoint epistemologies must give up the pretense to provide "the best chance of reaching an optimum truth" because there are no longer any independent "impartial" and "objective" criteria to establish the validity of such a claim. But if the claim of standpoint epistemology is weakened to mean that, as Pels puts it, "the promise of critical objectivity is not found 'in the subject position of identity' but in 'partial connection,' in the joining together of partial views," then the result is nothing less pedestrian than the traditional consensus theory of truth, according to which truth is arrived at through a reasoned evaluation and reconciliation of all competing truth claims.

Despite his devastating analysis, Pels stops short of debunking the academic trajectory of "new social movements" as another covert power-grab by marginal wannabe New Class intellectuals. He does, however, broach the fact that the strange standpoints he discusses obtain entirely within the *modernist* model and ultimately presuppose the very Enlightenment ideology they pretend to attack. After all, *theoria* is a Western invention — probably by privileged, middle-aged, white males — and so is universality, first institutionalized by Christianity; and even tolerance of otherness is a byproduct of the Protestant Reformation.

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Thus, at best, standpoint epistemologies can only provide correctives to the predominant ideology — something always presupposed by the very notions of discussion and criticism. Despite its radical pretenses, the multicultural outlook is inextricably part of the Western tradition and, as such, can never effectively challenge it other than within the sophistry of academic turf-wars.

The Unbearable Lightness of Being an Intellectual

What remains ambiguous in Pels' account is the role of intellectuals defined, as always, in terms of the transmission and reconstitution of culture. Contrary to Marxist claims, this definition also includes Gramsci's "organic" intellectuals. The latter, in fact, differ from their traditional counterpart not because of any "standpoint epistemology" but merely because, during periods of rapid change, they emphasize primarily the *reconstitution* of culture within new conditions rather than simply the *transmission* of the given. Unwilling and unable to imprison intellectuals within any particular standpoint, Pels ultimately falls back, almost by default, on the Mannheimian solution. Thus, camouflaged as Macchiavelli's cartographers, Pels' intellectuals float in the cultural ether filling the artificial abyss separating the various locations within the existing social hierarchy. But this disengagement of intellectuals from their social context reintroduces the question of their collective identity as a New Class articulating its own particular interests and institutionalizing new therapeutic relations of domination primarily through the state apparatus. Thus, not much seems to have changed since the Marxist debates of the 1920s and 1930s, with the exception that the Leninist quest for political power has been substituted by the new social movements' quest for academic power and cultural hegemony. It is not an accident that, with the exception of the pre-WWI anti-Semitic speculations of obscure intellectuals such as Jan Machajsky or, later, the equally anti-Semitic ravings of Bruno Rizzi, serious theories of the New Class began to be developed in the 1930s by James Burnham, followed over the years by Milovan Djilas, Gyorgy Konrad and Ivan Szeleny, Alwin W. Gouldner, *et al.*

Terminally entangled in modernist cobwebs, none of these theoreticians of the New Class went much beyond criticizing the New Class' *universalist* pretenses to prefigure an alternative model of "populist" intellectuals as both remaining grounded and at the same time transcending their particular communities, understood not as voluntary associations of people sharing one particular attribute (gender, race, sexual preference,

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ethnic origin, etc.), but as organic aggregations of people within a particular territory, sharing everyday life and engaged in the creation and reproduction of a common culture. As a result, these theorists could only envision intellectuals as members of a New Class pretending to represent humanity as a whole while in fact advancing, first and foremost, their own interests. The possibility of intellectuals remaining "organic" within a particular populist community while simultaneously participating in a broader discussion with other intellectuals from different communities — without necessarily deploying a disembodied, context-free discourse — is never broached. In fact, the very attempt to vindicate the particularity of such a community as the determining intellectual horizon is automatically dismissed as parochial. Posed in these terms, New Class theory has plunged sympathetic intellectuals into the awkward position of either having to question the role of intellectuals as such, or ultimately rejecting the theory in order to be able to defend their own status as intellectuals.

New social movement intellectuals advocating standpoint epistemologies end up in an even worse predicament. Having rejected universality as, e.g., "bourgeois" ideology, a Western metaphysical residue, or a patriarchal white male trick to legitimate traditional relations of domination, they either hypostatize their own particular viewpoint as universally valid, in which case they are confronted with competing accounts making the very same claim and with no possibility of adjudication other than brute force, or else they acknowledge their one-sidedness and degenerate into mere corrective accounts within the universally valid and objective knowledge they originally set out to challenge. In the first case, the result is outright dogmatism, while in the second, the new social movements downsize their exaggerated original claims to the level of traditional criticism, i.e., to ultimately conformist proposals for correcting and perfecting the given. Often, however, multiculturalists try to defend both positions, resulting in a dogmatic conformism.

This is what happens with Michael's attempt to vindicate standpoint epistemologies within a multicultural universalism — a convenient position from which he can carelessly hurl the charge of racism against anyone, even those seeking to "preserve European identity by restricting immigration." Why are these people racist? Allegedly, because restricting immigration "warrants the assumption that Africans are not participants in 'our' culture or that Asians are simply beyond the pale of US identity." But this simply does not follow. Obviously, American blacks are no less Americans than whites, which is why the term "African-American" is

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such a fraud, along with the whole business of hyphenated Americans — something instrumentalized by multiculturalists to fragment American identity into a cultural Babylon of abstract individuals totalized into a "people" only by New Class managerial expertise. Americans of Asian descent are Americans, not Asians, no matter how much they may know or engage in Asian cultural practices. Culture has little to do with distant ethnic origins or race. Rather, it consists of that dynamic spiritual dimension which allows various individuals and groups to define themselves as a people as a result of sharing communal space, interacting according to accepted standards, and participating in the same social life. This is why all real communities have a cultural heritage concerning which they have no choice — even though they are free to change their cultural practices by reinterpreting, expanding or restricting them, or even by inventing altogether new ones. After all, culture is not a cemetery of decaying corpses to be visited from time to time, but a dynamic living practice defining and redefining collective consciousness. The racial composition of the members of any given culture is usually irrelevant — with the exception of extreme cases such as Nazi Germany, where the state sought to hypostatize anti-Semitism to the level of *the* defining characteristic of that particular national culture.

The claim that the US has a European identity is not about race but about the values and traditions that have been defining for collective consciousness, as objectified in public and private institutions. This European identity is not up for debate, no matter how many immigrants belonging to different races there may have been at the time of its founding or now. A people defines itself politically not as an empirical aggregation of individuals or groups merely sharing a particular territory, but by positing itself as a political entity at a particular time. As Gramsci put it, there were no Italians prior to 1861 when the country was founded, no French citizens before 1789, and no Americans prior to the signing of the Declaration of Independence and eventually the Constitution — both paradigmatically European documents firmly grounded in British traditions, the French Enlightenment and Roman law. In fact, no people could survive as a people without a concept of itself, an idea of its own identity or a homogeneous culture uniting its members.

Here, the red herring is the adjective "homogeneous." It either evokes the serial products of an assembly line practically identical in every respect, or the kind of insipid milk mass-marketed in all industrial societies after it has been cleansed not only of all allegedly harmful bacteria but

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also of whatever gave it its flavor and much of its nutrition. Fortunately, political culture is not like assembly line products or industrialized milk. Homogeneity in politics can only mean voluntary adherence to whatever set of rules and regulations a given political entity has decided to give itself. It has nothing to do with eating shish-kebab or choucroute, being able to speak Swahili or Hebrew, being female or black. Thus, unless he uncritically buys into the mass media's superficial definition of culture as, e.g., idiosyncratic tastes for particular consumer products, Michael is simply wrong in claiming that "the US has never been monocultural. In cultural terms, despite the depredations of dominant groups, the US has been like the world: heterogeneous and conflicted." No country can be like the world, which necessarily includes a plurality of countries, with their own cultures. By leveling the distinction between this country and the world, Michael gives expression to a one-world vision, in which, basically, everyone is always the same, despite simultaneous homilies about differences and diversity. In fact, his claim that the US is like the world exposes the underlying Wilsonian assumption that the world is or should be like the US. Multiculturalism turns out to be the heir of the imperial vision of American liberalism, in which a multicultural American way-of-life becomes the norm for the whole globe.

As for the US, on the federal level, there has always been only *one* Constitution, as well as one legal system and one well-defined territory. However, the question concerning the preservation European identity is more complex. In addition to the obvious fact that all immigrants, with the possible exception of temporary workers, come to the US with the clear understanding that they, or at least their offspring, will become Americans, what is at issue, in addition to labor needs or political considerations, is their potential assimilability. Depending on the local labor markets, social services, housing availability, etc. of the host communities, it is obvious that there are limits to the number of immigrants that can be integrated at any given time.

A careful consideration of these limits not only makes it much easier on the communities in question to accommodate the new immigrants, but also makes the traumatic experience of emigration immensely easier for the new immigrants. In fact, racism and xenophobia result mostly when the greed of the local capitalists for large pools of cheap labor or exceptional political problems in neighboring countries lead to levels of immigration much higher than can be readily accommodated in the host communities, resulting in all too well known conflicts, misunderstandings and various

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social pathologies. In situations of failed integration because of, e.g., the arrival of too large a number of *illegal* immigrants in communities unprepared to accommodate them (as seems to be the case today in at least some parts of California), cultural identity becomes a problem after these immigrants are forced to fall back on their own *ad hoc* institutional arrangements, to deal with problems the host community cannot tackle or by making do with whatever means may be available — including criminality, as in the case of the Mafia which initially did both. Only in such rare pathological situations does the question of a community's cultural identity arise and then, of course, a given community has to think about restricting the rate of immigration to preserve its particular cultural identity.

The question is further complicated by the fact that Michael thinks of the entire US as a *community*, whereas communities cannot be that large without losing their informal common bonds and turning into formal *societies* predicated only on formal arrangements. But even in the case of the US, which is a federation of states, themselves aggregations of smaller county units, there is no heterogeneity resembling the rest of the world: the Constitution is the ultimate homogenizing document defining the otherwise ethnically, racially, linguistically, etc. heterogeneous citizens of the country as "Americans": *e pluribus unum*, where the "*pluribus*" obtains only within the "*unum*," which, *mutatis mutandis*, does not destroy the "*pluribus*" in the process. This is why California's Proposition 187 is a case in point. Contrary to popular (and Michael's) perception, what is primarily at stake is not restricting or expanding immigration but the unwillingness of one of the "*pluribus*" (the state of California) to pay for the failures of the "*unum*" to effectively control the flow of *illegal* immigrants — both in terms of the costs for social services to a larger number of these immigrants than the various local communities can comfortably accommodate, as well as the threat to their identity posed by the failure to readily integrate them.

The Aporias of Multiculturalism

Michael's defense of multiculturalism reveals the flaws of such an ideology: on the one hand, it presupposes a dogmatic universalism which allows the deployment of a politically correct moralism neutralizing all particularity and heterogeneity, while on the other, it vindicates the pseudo-particularity of the new social movements whose critique, when not predicated on untenable "standpoint epistemologies," is *de facto* indistinguishable from garden varieties of traditional internal criticism.

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Thus he finds standpoint epistemologies "useful since they open up new ways of conceiving the origins of differences among us in an increasingly heterogeneous and fraught social environment." But is a society as deep in a consumerist coma as the US really "increasingly heterogeneous"? Do immigrants, whether from Pakistan or Malaysia or England, really want anything different from what practically everyone else wants? Contrary to what Michael claims, "multiculturalism" has not "always been an American problem." It became a problem in the 1970s when frustrated ex-Marxists instrumentalized it to delegitimate "Western culture" — a stalking horse for capitalism — after it became clear that socialism provided no real alternative to any of the problems of post-industrial societies. By belatedly discovering that "such things are culturally constructed and historically conditioned" — as if before this discovery people believed that culture fell from the sky or grew on trees, as the Great Helmsman used to say — multiculturalists seek to emphasize the *ontological arbitrariness* of all culture and therefore pave the way for whatever equally arbitrary alternative they happen to prefer.

Here, however, they run into the problems of standpoint epistemologies: if all constructs are arbitrary and there is no neutral way to adjudicate among them, then it becomes a political matter concerning which group is sufficiently strong to impose its viewpoint or, in a democratic system, vote it in. Since the multiculturalists' ranks consist mostly of intellectuals safely entrenched in the newer academic subdisciplines or in English departments, thus unable to muster a majority anywhere other than, occasionally, in faculty meetings, such a democratic option is not a promising one for them. This is why, as Pels shows, they gradually backtrack to the hitherto dismissed universalism and objectivism, while still claiming, inconsistently, a privileged position from which to ascertain "truth, beauty and the American way." They want both a privileged position excluding anyone not belonging to arbitrary aggregations of individuals (definitely not a community) sharing only one characteristic, be it gender, sexual preference, race, etc., while at the same time claiming that their relativistic epistemologies can give birth to objectively valid truth or at least to social constructions more "rational" than either existing ones or those constructed by others.

Since no culture can thrive unless it takes its own tenets to be objectively true, and historically there have always been many radically different cultures making such a claim, the result is either a *bellum omnium contra omnes* where one may eventually defeat all others, as Christianity

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and Islam almost did at the acme of their hegemony, or else the various cultures stop trying to impose their own "true" culture on all others and recognize the right to live in error and "darkness" (the principle of tolerance). What is impossible is for *a particular people* to pretend to have conflicting sets of organizing principles, since in that case there will still be one superculture, multiculturalism, as self-righteous and dogmatic as any, pretending to tolerate all others subcultures within itself by trivializing and reducing them to whatever happens to be compatible with the predominant superculture. This is why a federal system uncontaminated by Enlightenment features such as universal "rights" encroaching on the particularity of competing subunits is probably the most viable political system: it allows for true particularity to thrive within communities while coexisting and respecting that of others.

Unfortunately, there are no ultimate guarantees in this world, which means that it is not always possible to resolve *all* disputes through discussion and rational persuasion — especially in cases involving conflicts between radically different cultures. Consequently, in extreme instances in which, e.g., the community practices of a neighboring state become intolerable, as in the case of Nazi Germany or of slave societies, then war turns out to be the only option. While this horrifies liberals unwilling to go that far, this is what happens when there are real and otherwise irresolvable cultural conflicts. All too willing to acknowledge cultural differences, but unwilling and unable to make decisions not grounded on universal transcendental principles they forget they have already rejected, liberal multiculturalists have no qualms about pretending to enforce a *culturally particular* "political correctness" they simultaneously present as universally valid, thus drawing the contradictions of standpoint epistemologies to their dogmatic conformist conclusions.

Michael does not like lynching nor, presumably, burning witches, sacrificing virgins or a number of equally "peculiar" cultural practices that rub Western sensitivities the wrong way. But as Kafka tried to point out in "The Penal Colony," often it is precisely those practices which keep the community together. Contrary to liberal readings, in that story the community disintegrates when the rational voyager finally gains the upper hand and imposes his will over the allegedly premodern officer.[1] While lynching may be a bad example, since it may be seen as a resentful over-reaction within *defeated* Southern communities whose laws were

1. See David Pan, "Kafka as a Populist: Re-reading 'In the Penal Colony'," in *Telos* 101 (Fall 1994), pp. 3-40.

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imposed from outside and therefore considered illegitimate, other equally "unsavory" customs such as human sacrifices or clitoridectomy provide the litmus test both for multicultural tolerance and federal feasibility. But whereas in the latter case such practices may be *honestly* regarded as *causus belli* or reason enough to dissolve a political union on the grounds of particular moral principles, multiculturalists approach it in an intellectually dishonest way. Forcibly eliminating such customs on the basis of "human rights" or other universalist fictions, as feminists and other "new social movements" demand, at the cost of also destroying the communities which practices them, not only reveals the dishonesty and dogmatism of multicultural universalism but also the extent to which, far from providing an alternative to the allegedly dreaded Western imperialism, it merely extends it by other means.

Globalization and its Modernist Discontents

Although it has done considerable damage in demonizing Western culture and disrupting its transmission within higher education, multicultural sophistry is ultimately irrelevant, even as what orthodox Marxists used to deride as a proverbial "lackey" of Western imperialism. After the collapse of communism, Western imperialism no longer needs any academic apologists camouflaged as its sophisticated postmodern opponents. Capitalism today is the only game in town and globalization is its favorite strategy to overrun all the obstacles in its path. As Claude Karnoouh indicates in his article on drug addiction and "amoral reflections on the postmodern," globalization reduces everything to the level of commodities and exchange value, wreaking havoc everywhere. Not only does it destroy the kind of cultural frameworks necessary to negotiate everyday life, but with the help of drugs it also pacifies its marginalized victims into a false sense of participation in the glitz the culture industry successfully substitutes for meaning. The drug culture provides the perfect mode of escape from the nihilism that hits those marginalized by a system from whose consumerist chimera they are thereby excluded. As such, smoking crack has become the ghetto alternative to going shopping and doing cocaine a yuppy substitute for liturgy.

This is why Karnoouh emphasizes the futility of merely treating drug addicts, without at the same time curing the society spawning such a pathology. But here is the catch: drugs deactivate their victims and render them unable to undertake any traditional form of spontaneous responses, such as riots, rebellion or, in extreme cases, revolution. Even

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if these traditional responses were possible, there do not seem to be any readily available viable alternatives to the existing state of affairs. Historically, opposition to earlier versions of globalization (such as imperialism or simply capitalist exploitation) have appealed to the state as a means to contain its devastating impact. For much of the 19th and 20th centuries, the lure of socialism was primarily predicated on the claim that the state could successfully regulate capitalism. In doing so, however, the state also stifled economic life. Similarly, authoritarian regimes have occasionally proven themselves up to the task, but at the cost of curtailing freedom in addition to debilitating their own economy as effectively as did socialism. Today, both socialist and authoritarian solutions have been terminally discredited. Within such a dearth of alternatives, Alain de Benoist, in his article on "Confronting Globalization," sees the need for supranational political entities such as a truly sovereign Europe to confront multinational capital in a way that the old nation-states no longer can. Thus he proposes the constitution of updated versions of Carl Schmitt's *Großräume* as a possible alternative. As he himself admits, however, this is not the direction Europe seems to be going.

Even if European unification does happen and manages to institute a common currency to compete effectively with the dollar, the Maastricht Treaty still keeps the new political formation hostage to the old nation-states, whose politicians are unwilling to give up too many of their current prerogatives. Yet, alternative visions of Europe as both stronger but at the same time less intrusive than Delors' model are hard to come by. Benoist hints at the possibility of a Europe aggregating alternative political sub-units — smaller and more cohesive than the existing nation-states — able to defend cultural particularity against abstract universality. This alternative is not likely to be entertained seriously in the immediate future. Not only are the recent victories of the Left in Italy, France and England all predicated on defending the existing welfare state and its central redistributing apparatus, but both the old and the new Right, from the National Front in France to Alleanza Nazionale in Italy, are also committed to the nation-state as the fundamental political institution.

Both in the West as well as in the former communist countries, the resurgence of the Left, after it seemed to have lost all credibility in the wake of the collapse of communism and the crisis of social democracy, does not signal a call for radical change but, paradoxically enough, is clearly a *conservative* reaction to the disruptions and uncertainties of globalization. It is also a dead-end. The French may vote for having their

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cake and eating it too, but this will not help reduce unemployment, reinvigorate a flaccid economy or reform a bloated bureaucratic apparatus. Yet the need for radical change remains and it is only a matter of time before it will rise to the top of the European political agenda in the wake of some economic or political crisis.

This increasingly conservative, ostrich-like mentality in France is not limited to politics. It permeates culture as well. As Sonia Combe reveals in recounting her attempts to gain access to contemporary French archives, notwithstanding its pretense to openness and enlightenment, the French state keeps French culture on a tight reign by carefully monitoring what can and cannot be examined, even by professional historians. This is particularly true in the case of sensitive material such as documents pertaining to the Vichy period. It is not surprising, therefore, that former President François Mitterrand was able to keep his collaborationist past well concealed for so many years, and only when he was about to die were at least some of the facts made public through his own volition (a kind of insurance policy against much more catastrophic exposés somewhere down the line). The result is a broader cultural closure where the official views prevail and all dissent remains ostracized.[2]

Although the establishment and the main political parties remain stubbornly committed to "official" culture and the old model of the nation-state, almost every country in Europe is threatened by regionalist or even secessionist movements seeking to break away from the increasingly cumbersome and inefficient central state — from Belgium to Italy and Spain. This is not an idiosyncratic European problem, nor one limited to the establishment. As Wayne A. Hunt shows in his discussion of "the Quebec Question," even secessionist movements end up recycling within their own ideology the model of the nation-state they reject as

2. The case of the witch-hunt of Alain de Benoist is exemplary of the general cultural climate. Not sufficiently embarrassed by the scandal concerning the grotesque attempts to censure out of public discussion the views of de Benoist and anyone associated with the New Right — extensively documented in *Telos* 98-99 (Winter 1993-Spring 1994) — the vigilantes are still in business. Thus, in the wake of the publication of a special issue of *Krisis*, a journal edited by Benoist, on "Art/Non-Art" (No. 19, November 1996), *Le Monde* has devoted an entire page of its February 15, 1997 issue to a piece by Philippe Degan denouncing *Krisis* for daring to criticize modern art as "degenerate" — the standard Nazi critique of modern art. As is customary in France, the polemic dragged on for several weeks in a number of journals, such as *Politis*, whose March 20, 1997 issue included the customary protest letter concerning the whole censorial affair (originally addressed to *Le Monde* but, of course, never published in its pages) signed by some thirty leading French intellectuals.

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obsolete. Thus they tend to replicate within themselves the very contradictions they originally set out to resolve. Once again, it is a matter of a failure of the imagination: the failure to envision concrete political alternatives to the given. Far from being any different from every other nation-state, the independent Quebec envisioned by local francophones has already mechanically reproduced in relation to, e.g., its indigenous populations, all of the problems it has with Canada as a whole. And as other nation-states have already found out, their fate is in the hands of multinational capitalist forces beyond their control. Thus the bitter struggle between the Quebec government and the indigenous people over a massive hydroelectric project became practically moot when the international market for hydro-electric power disappeared.

As usual, this imagination deficit is not the monopoly of only one side of the political spectrum. As Mark Wegierski shows in his review of the latest book by one of Canada's most distinguished conservative scholars — a collection of essays originally written for a newspaper and therefore aimed at a wide lay audience — the so-called Right is also on intellectual welfare. While outraged by the postmodern absurdities he so readily ridicules, in locating his critique within a practical political program William D. Gairdner ultimately ends up deploying as his central theoretical tenet the functional equivalent of a conceptual Yugo — a poor East European imitation of an obsolete Western model long since rejected by its original creators. The concept of "civil society" he uses to designate what should be salvaged of whatever remains of "traditional Canadian culture" turns out to be a liberal Trojan horse introducing into the conservative camp all the multicultural aberrations he otherwise despises. It is not a coincidence that, although he is no longer a member of the Reform Party, he shares a number of its positions which, notwithstanding their rhetorical fury, do not provide much of an alternative to the old Liberal and Progressive-Conservative parties. Not surprisingly, like the Republican Party south of the border, the Reform Party is only slightly less technocratic and centralist than its opposition.

This generally depressing series of depictions of globalization as terminally evil, but at the same time unassailable other than by means of academic laments, is broken only by Catherine Pickstock's positing of genuine traditional alternatives to reconstruct cultures and thus resist the ill effects of globalization (or capitalism, commercialism and whatever other euphemism may be used). Maybe this seemingly irreversible decadence which globalism feeds on and into is not its consequence but its

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cause. Could it be that consumerism, drug addiction and social misery are possible only within societies already culturally devastated by a modernity universally accepted as inevitable but really already exhausted? Could it be that this self-confident modernity is not really self-corrective, but parasitic on precisely that transcendental dimension it belittles and tries at all costs to marginalize as residual superstition and myth? Could it be that, far from being exhausted, traditional cultures still hold that means for cultural revival? As Pickstock argues systematically in her forthcoming book *After Writing*,[3] the Western tradition has nothing to do with what the so-called postmodern critics have dismissed as "Western metaphysics" — which turns out to be the red thread of modernism tracing back to the Athenian sophists — but is rooted in a liturgical tradition far from exhausted. If such is the case, cultural critics should stop charging the windmills of globalization and turn instead against the real modernist enemy. After centuries of ridicule, Don Quixote may turn out to have been right after all.

Russell A. Berman, Paul Piccone and Gary Ulmen

3. A modified version of the first chapter of this book has already appeared as "Plato's Deconstruction of Derrida," in *Telos* 107 (Spring 1996), pp. 9-44.

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*Anti-Semitism and Anti-Black Racism: Nazi Germany and Apartheid South Africa**

Heribert Adam

Roots of Anti-Semitism

Conventional wisdom holds that antipathy toward one minority usually combines with prejudice toward other "outsiders." Disdain for Jews goes along with contempt for blacks. Various scapegoats are manufactured interchangeably. Often they are blamed simultaneously. Even if "Bolsheviks" and "capitalist exploiters" share nothing, the conspiratorial mind lumps them together as causes of misery, without bothering with the contradiction. Yet racism shows many faces. Where several targets and potential "enemies" can be manufactured into threats to national survival, some are more, others less discriminated against. The cultural characteristics or the behavior of the minority hardly influence such selective stigmatization. Ethnicity is never the cause of antagonism, only its vehicle and demarcation. The specific discrimination depends on political circumstances. State responses to ethnocultural diversity and fluctuating élite interest account for stereotyping and ethnic mobilization.

Such revisions of conventional wisdom can be concluded from Milton Shain's intriguing new book,[1] which corrects a common misperception that the early Apartheid state was free of anti-Semitism because it was preoccupied with anti-black racism. On the contrary, Shain documents comprehensively how anti-Semitic ideas "provided such a useful means of political mobilization for the Afrikaner right-wing," particularly

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* A shorther version of this paper was originally delivered at the Kaplan Centre of the University of Cape Town, March 14, 1995. I wish to thank Milton Shain, the director of the Centre, for stimulating discussions, and Kogila Moodley for a frank critique.

1. Milton Shain, *The Roots of Antisemitism in South Africa* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1994).

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in the 1930s and 1940s.[2] This nuanced history of Afrikaner perceptions of Jews traces the evolving stereotypes: from welcome peddlers of wares in the Transvaal hinterland to the exploiting plutocrat and indulging parvenu (Hoggenheimer) in city luxury. Nationalist mobilization easily reconciled such imagery with the later label of Jews as subversives, in league with Bolshevik-inspired strikes and anti-Apartheid activism at the height of Afrikaner domination. Yet Shain also points out how anti-Semitic ideology was tempered by Jews as part of the white ruling class in South Africa. Despite negative stereotyping, "they faced little formal exclusion and ostracism,"[3] in contrast to South African Indians. While Indian competitors to white traders were disdained and progressively restricted, Shain diagnoses even "a grudging respect"[4] for the Jewish fortune-seeker in a frontier society that "put a premium on rugged individualism." Political expediency in collaborating with Israel further facilitated that incorporation of the Jew as "one of us," compared with the non-white Indian alien.

Who is included or excluded from an arbitrary pigmentocracy may have also been influenced by two other factors Shain pays little attention to: 1) The religiously inspired notion of a "chosen people" at odds with a hostile environment predisposed Afrikaner Calvinists to look at Jews as compatriots. 2) Unlike the much less developed Coloured and Indian mercantile capital, alleged Jewish economic control of major conglomerates at home and abroad made a rising Afrikaner bourgeoisie appreciate the value of collaboration for common benefits. In short, Pretoria could hardly afford to alienate such powerful forces with official anti-Semitism when a sanction-battered state needed allies. Such political-economic exigencies, more than the psychological explanation of blacks serving "as the lightening rod for racism," would seem to account for "the virtual absence of white anti-Semitism"[5] in the later periods of Apartheid South Africa.

Shain's insightful study on the changing socio-political circumstances that shape stereotyping suggests a much wider comparison between different forms of racism. Instead of viewing Apartheid as madness, as moral pathology, could it not be understood better as rational racism, in contrast to irrational anti-Semitic fascism? A comparison between the two most horrendous systems of racism, namely Nazi Germany and Apartheid South Africa, can reveal significantly different intentions and modes of domination that the popular "fascist Apartheid" analogy misses.

2. *Ibid.*, p. ix.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 151.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 152.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 152.

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The Nazis of Africa: Apartheid as Holocaust?

The old controversy about the comparison of Apartheid and Nazism has been refuelled with the publication of a book by Kader Asmal, Louise Asmal, and Ronald Suresh Roberts[6] — a book which should not be dismissed as mere propaganda simply because Kader Asmal is a well-known cabinet minister. Precisely because the ANC's chief ethics' commissioner and widely respected legal expert and human rights advocate articulates controversial opinions forthrightly, his account has to be taken seriously.

The authors' powerful polemic seeks to remind South Africans of the atrocities committed by a "criminal régime"; it records the well-known racial laws and exhorts Apartheid's beneficiaries to take collective responsibility. It denies that defenders and resisters can be placed "on an equivalent legal footing." Asmal seems to side with those in the ANC who incited Tutu's ire because they argued that they fought "a just war" and, therefore, do not need to appear before his "Truth Commission." Asmal *et al.* admit "comparatively few" or "scattered human rights infringements" on the part of the ANC. They are called mere "lapses" of an "underresourced" organization under stress, "never condoned" but "actually forbidden." If that is the case, why the initial leading ANC members' reluctance to appear before the Commission? In their eagerness to establish that resisters and defenders of Apartheid inhabit "fundamentally incompatible, moral universes," the authors ignore the classical philosophical distinction between a "just war" and "justice in war." No one doubts that the anti-Apartheid movement fought a just cause. The complementary principle of "justice in war" insists that, even in such cases, conventions of justice have to be followed and the just party must be held accountable if it does not do so (for instance, killing prisoners of war or unnecessarily harming civilians) regardless of the moral evil of the opponent. The oppressed are also bound by the rules. Tutu, to his eternal credit, brought this principle home.

The Asmal indictment becomes more problematic in its constant references to the Nazis of Africa in order to justify classifying Apartheid as a "form of genocide." The Nazi analogies are supposed to sweep the reader into outrage. Apartheid South Africa resembles an open-house concentration camp. Indeed, it is generally known that many leading Apartheid ideologues sympathized with the Nazis in the 1940s. But that was mainly in the context of anti-war mobilization on the side of the British. It is

6. Kader Asmal, Louise Asmal, and Ronald Suresh Roberts, *Reconciliation through Truth. A Reckoning of Apartheid's Criminal Governance* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1996).

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unclear in Asmal's account whether they adopted this attitude because of similar racist and anti-Semitic beliefs or because of anti-British sentiment. Nowhere in the book is it mentioned that a leading "Nazi" such as Prime Minister Vorster later visited Jerusalem's Holocaust memorial, and that Israel, more than any other independent state, collaborated with the South African "Nazis." While Israel also collaborated with other unsavory régimes, the real Nazis would not have been able to collaborate with Jews (and vice versa) even out of necessity or expediency.

Sloganeering about "Verwoerd's ideological klansman Adolf Hitler," frequent comparisons between the Nuremberg Laws against Jews and Apartheid laws miss the different context behind the anti-black and anti-Semitic racism. For example, to claim that Apartheid "was a principle around which large numbers of people actively rallied, as they rallied around anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany"[7] suggests similar reasons for the support when in fact the reasons for Afrikaner and German nationalism differed substantially. The comparison ignores that Apartheid tolerated an outspoken white opposition, in contrast to Hitler's totalitarian control of the population. That made support for Apartheid actually worse in the presence of clear alternatives. Asmal *et al.* write: "In analogy with Heydrich's Nazi reliance on the watchful eyes of Germans to oppress Jews, section II enabled neighbors to object to the classification of any fellow-resident as a white person."[8] No German had any veto against the classification of neighbors as Jews. Nor did the Nazis rely on "watchful eyes" but on ancestral records, because Jewishness was not visible but had to be made so by a mandatory wearing of the yellow star. Other false analogies abound, such as: "The Broederbond was remodelled on the lines of Hitler's Nazi party with secret cells and a secret membership."[9] In fact, the Nazi Party (NSDAP) was an open mass party, hardly comparable with the 15.000 carefully selected members of the Broederbond. The Broederbond initially formed an employment agency for Afrikaner professionals and later served more as a political think-tank. As an élite organization, it could at most be compared to the SS without uniforms and military functions.

Asmal *et al.* rightly point to the neglected collaboration of many business tycoons with Apartheid, just as the Krupp, IG Farben and other beneficiaries of the German war machine went along quietly with the Nazi policy. In seeming contradiction, however, the authors also assert: "Thus,

7. *Ibid.*, p. 149.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

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for Apartheid's functionaries as for the Nazis, international capital and its most bitter opponents (Communists) were one and the same."[10] This simplistic conclusion from the well-known stereotyping of "Jewish financiers as agents of communism" overlooks that Apartheid advocates extended great efforts and resources to woo international capital. In contrast, the German Nazis despised international capital as controlled by Jews. Apartheid always presented itself as a bastion against communism which needed the help of the West to fend off sanctions and secure South Africa for free enterprise. Ironically, the abolition of Apartheid achieved this goal far more successfully than its worried advocates could have dreamed of.

In Apartheid South Africa, a minority régime fought "by all means possible" the seizure of power by the majority. In doing so, it tortured, killed, and disregarded human rights conventions as it pleased. In Nazi Germany, a sectarian élite set out to eliminate systematically designated minorities who had no political ambitions and were therefore no threat to the ruling group except in the fantasy of the rulers who constructed them as the major enemy. Unlike the fictitious conflict between Germans and Jews, in Apartheid South Africa a real civil war took place with self-declared opponents on each side. In Nazi Germany, a struggle existed only in the imagination of the anti-Semite. No Jews ever dreamt of overthrowing a German government before the pogroms started. Even then, many Jews foolishly did not realize the impending threat and believed in the false security of real assimilation. This different constellation does not absolve the Apartheid executioners of their crimes. However, it locates their deeds differently, requiring more nuanced explanations to comprehend their motives.

Most of Asmal *et al.*'s text utilizes UN resolutions to substantiate their claim that Apartheid was genocide. While the UN played a strategic role in giving international prominence to injustices under Apartheid, the language used is not very useful in gaining an understanding of the phenomenon. The quest for the elimination of racial inequality calls for nothing less than a scrupulously honest deconstruction of the underpinnings of racial ideologies and the personal motivations of its beneficiaries. Neither of these aims is met through the uncritical use of hyperbolic description, though it may have had its strategic value at certain historic junctures. Nor is a distinction between types of oppression intended to trivialize the experiences of victims of each kind of racialized situation or give moral support to the former oppressors, as Asmal hints his critics do when they

10. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

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try "to preserve a semblance of morality" underneath Apartheid. The authors call this "our own brand of Holocaust denial." Steven Friedman[11] has drawn attention to another danger of this partisan denouncement of all critics as willing or unwilling allies of Apartheid: those who fought the moral evil of Apartheid in the ANC place themselves beyond reproach. With their moral credentials, they now claim "a license for them to govern in whichever way they please," because they need not be judged by the same standard. If all criticism of liberation policies is automatically tainted by the suspicion of Apartheid support, the new rulers have successfully delegitimatized all opposition and given themselves a free hand. To rely solely on UN resolutions to discern the nature of a regime can be misleading. One only has to be reminded of the ill-considered "Zionism is racism" verdict, later rescinded. The so-called international community — in the form of national government representatives with their own agendas — functions as a poor forum for reliable moral judgements. Yet taking its rationale from a UN sub-committee, Asmal and his co-authors insist that Apartheid as genocide is not hyperbole but "an understatement."[12]

It is always a macabre undertaking to compare degrees of oppression. One dissenter harassed is too many. It is also a futile exercise to argue, as has been done in the South African press, whether Apartheid constitutes a crime against humanity or something worse or less offensive. The fact that the notion of a crime against humanity has been pushed by states allied with the Soviet Union in a Cold War climate and resisted by Western democracies is equally irrelevant for the correctness of the verdict. If words have any meaning, Apartheid did not amount to genocide — even if the term is stretched to include any harm done to the life chances of ethnic or racial collectivities. Profound legal discrimination and genocide remain two distinct events. Apartheid robbed the South African majority of dignity and countless opportunities. It deprived the disenfranchised of land, jobs and equal pay, of the right to family life, equality of education, and tried to make them foreigners in the land of their birth. It terrorized those who resisted and, in the process, maimed and killed some of the best and the bravest. But genocide it was not. Otherwise, the number of blacks, both absolute and relative to the ruling group, would not have increased steadily, notwithstanding higher child mortality and lower life expectancy of Africans. Ironically, the authors themselves unwittingly confirm this when they compare the thousandfold more people killed in

11. *Business Day* (November 11, 1996).
12. Asmal *et al.*, *Reconciliation through Truth, op. cit.*, p. 201.

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the mines than by the police torturers: "throughout the entire Apartheid period, 68 political prisoners died in police detention." This could be an average figure of Jews killed in a month in a small Ukrainian town by the German occupiers and their auxiliaries. In short, if anything and everything amounts to Nazism and genocide, then nothing is Nazism and genocide. The propagandistic inflation of serious accusations cheapens the fate of the real victims of Nazism. By being blind to nuances and necessary differentiations, by ahistorical labelling and false analogies, well-intended polemicists may be able to incite passion, even combat dangerous historical amnesia, but hardly contribute to political literacy.

If Daniel Goldhagen's central thesis is correct, far more ordinary German soldiers and prison guards voluntarily participated in the Nazi atrocities than generally believed. They were keen to act out their own deficiencies on dehumanized objects. Under Apartheid, however, a different constellation prevailed. The vastly outnumbered ruling group could not seek to eliminate but only control the majority. This required the active participation of willing members of the discriminated. At the height of Apartheid, during the 1970s and 1980s, about two-thirds of the South African police were already black. Far from being reluctant co-optees in their own subjugation, the black police personnel, on the whole, had fully internalized the official doctrine of fighting terrorism. They frequently outperformed their white masters. They, in turn, prided themselves on fighting a common enemy together. No Nazi official would have accepted Jews within their ranks. This dependence of the Apartheid régime on their "others" — not only in assuring security but at all levels of life, from economic survival to administrative capacity — also acquired a general perception of the subordinates that differed from the Nazis' generalized demonization of Jews. Apartheid advocates could only afford selective reprisals against suspected activists, not the indiscriminate terror of the Nazis against all members of the outgroup, regardless of their political outlook. At the same time, comprehensive legal control in South Africa discouraged private unofficial violence. KKK vigilante activity was relatively rare. The phenomenon of a "Third Force" of policemen killing on their own with the tacit or explicit approval of politicians escalated only when the régime was already losing control. However, even during this transitional era, the Apartheid government had to pretend that policemen complied with "the law" which was supposed to apply equally to white and black, master and servant. In contrast, Nazi Germany explicitly placed Jews outside the law and thereby legitimized arbitrary terrorism. Had

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Apartheid Pretoria pursued a similar strategy, it would have incited massive upheavals. The appearance of legality and impartial justice was a necessary instrument of minority domination to the extent that the government sometimes paid compensation to victims of police torture and always cultivated the image of independent courts. Unlike Hitler's followers, Apartheid's "willing executioners" were always constrained by legal authority. In the German case, the will of the leader reigned supreme. In the colonial setting, far more complex factors intervened to make it both easier and more difficult to combat oppression.

The struggle against Apartheid suffered from the manipulation of the opposition, from co-optation to sophisticated concessions alternating with outright repression. In Hitler's case, only repression prevailed as a matter of principle. The anti-Apartheid struggle, however, was also facilitated by circumstances that were not allowed to surface in Germany: The victims in South Africa could expect to find influential allies within the ruling group. Any expression of empathy or support for Jews in Nazi Germany was considered an act of treason that threatened heavy penalties. While some heroic whites from Braam Fisher to Neil Aggett paid this price in South Africa as well, far more sympathized actively or passively with the black cause in a variety of ways and for a multitude of reasons. Whether out of self-interest or moral qualms, by openly appealing to the better sense of the rulers, the Apartheid opposition strengthened itself immensely.

It was the split in the ruling group, the cleavage between "softliners" and "hardliners" (*verligte* and *verkrampte*), that ultimately allowed for the negotiated revolution when the more far-sighted Afrikaner majority backed de Klerk's strategy of compromise. In the absence of such a public discourse about a group's self-concept, the Hitler opposition could not function in a totalitarian environment that silenced all dissent. By contrast, in the authoritarian South African state, despite censorship and emergency laws, projections of alternative orders exposed the bankruptcy of Apartheid, undermined the moral certainty of its upholders, and ultimately forged a new hegemony of negotiated co-existence. Thus an old lesson is again confirmed by the dialectic of repression: in order to succeed it has to be self-sufficient, total and ruthless. Any concession bears the seeds of an accelerating collapse.

Anti-Semitic and Anti-Black Stereotypes

Stereotypes help organize a complex world. They provide instant meaning by making it unnecessary to judge every situation according to its own merit. These pre-judgments are inevitable guideposts. No one can

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function without them. The interpretative repertoire of every individual is a complex mix. There is no simple, pure racist. Nor is the opposite possible. Most people hold ambivalent attitudes. Stereotypes themselves include typically contradictory images. For example, Jews are accused of being clannish, aloof and distant. When they forego ethnic specificity in favor of assimilation, as in late 19th century Western Europe, the anti-Semite sniffs a cunning ploy to sneak in.[13] In 19th century European medical literature, the alleged greater frequency of mental illness of Jews was ascribed to inbreeding and even incest. At the same time, images of "black Jew" or Jews as "white Negroes" were attributed to racial mixing in the diaspora.[14]

It is doubtful whether any easy association of Jewishness and blackness still applies. The myth of blacks may still lend itself to bear similar projections, but in quite different ways. Thus, in the realm of sexuality, Jews are nowadays considered perverse rather than, like blacks, sexually aggressive and unrestrained. They are both associated with sexual excess. Yet the supposed Jewish orgies of Hollywood's affluent media moguls or wheeler-dealers in New York contrast sharply with the perceived promiscuous behavior of juvenile drug-peddling ghetto-dwellers or the customary polygamy of blacks in the colonies or under Islamic license. At any rate, losing sight of the class difference between Jews and blacks in Western societies or the power of Israel compared with the relative powerlessness of black states in global politics misses important aspects.

According to Shain, anti-Semitic stereotypes were both a "barometer and facilitator of prejudice."[15] They prepared "the way for the growth and dissemination of anti-Semitism." Thus, given the monstrous consequences of both anti-Semitism and racism, the analysis of stereotypes is politically relevant. In order to combat racism, it is essential to grasp its constantly changing nature. For example, the new racism that utilizes culture instead of "race" inferiorizes through a more subtle "othering." When Brian Bunting, Kader Asmal and other polemicists in the anti-Apartheid

13. As Ali Rattansi has pointed out in private communication with the author, in contemporary Britain, Asian women are perceived as backward, traditional, pliant models of family stability, defying feminist emancipation. At the same time, they are portrayed as seductive sex objects in airline advertisements.

14. As Sander Gilman has written: "The image of blackness projects much of the repressed anxiety surrounding the Jew's sexual identity in twentieth century Europe. The depth of the association of Jews with the black enabled non-Jewish Europeans during the nineteenth century to 'see' the Jew as black." See Sander Gillman, *Difference and Pathology. Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race and Madness* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 34.

15. Shain, *op. cit.*, p. 4. Gilman, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

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camp equate Nazism with Apartheid by laboriously diagnosing the same essentialist racism in *Mein Kampf* and Verwoerd's writing, they are not only wrong but they harm their own cause. Nazi racism could only be overthrown from without, while Apartheid racism could reform itself from within when it became too costly.[16] It is inconceivable that a Nazi Gorbachev could have come to power, if National Socialism had survived a bit longer — certainly not as long as Hitler and his henchmen had been alive. While that also applies to Bolshevism under Stalin, the rationality of both mobilizing ideologies differed so fundamentally that Nazism could not have faded away without being physically defeated. The category "race" is subject to enormous variation in different times and places.[17] What can a comparison between the two most vicious and widespread forms of exclusion and denigration — Nazi anti-Semitism and Apartheid South African racism — yield?

Anti-Semitic stereotypes spring from different needs than anti-black images. In the colonial context, anti-black discrimination has an *instrumental* function: to exploit, subjugate or dispossess the colonized and legitimate the process with a racist ideology of a biological or cultural inferiority. Dominant attitudes are primarily *paternalistic*. They always distinguish between a majority of "good" and a minority of "bad" blacks. Only those who step out of their assigned place are targets of terror, while the majority are treated like unruly children in need of a stern father. Modern anti-Semitism, on the other hand, fulfills primarily *psycho-social* needs. In its utter *irrationality* of an imagined Jewish threat, it contrasts sharply with the more rational behavior of colonists to secure power and privilege through exclusion. Jews are not merely excluded, but exterminated. Jews do not face paternalistic selected terror, but indiscriminate persecution against all, regardless of their status or behavior. In short, the roots of modern anti-Semitism must be sought in the psycho-social realm of ego-weak characters. They construct their identity by denigrating others. They need scapegoats to externalize what cannot be sublimated. Anti-Semitism constitutes externalized repression. This does not mean

16. See Heribert Adam and Kogila Moodley, *The Negotiated Revolution* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1993).

17. Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy have stressed that, contrary to deterministic and reductionist analyses, there are different histories of racism. Thus Floya Antias and Nira Yuval-Davis point out that "racism cannot be limited to the experience of black people but had taken different forms in relation to the Irish, the Jews, the Gypsies and Third-World migrant workers, as well as other White minorities who may be migrant workers." See Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, *Racialized Boundaries* (London: Routledge, 1992).

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that anti-Semitism cannot also be analyzed in terms of its "rational" functions. As far as Nazis were concerned, having an imagined Jewish enemy inside the nation molded a strife-ridden, heterogeneous Nazi movement into a more unified force. Anti-Semitism provided an *esprit de corps*. Yet, it was an already existing psychological predisposition that made large sections of the European population so susceptible to fascist agitators.

In the colonial context, blacks were treated as part of an exotic fauna; the naturalized ingredients of a game park that could amuse but not threaten. As faceless objects, they existed outside a "civilized society" of which Jews were very much an integral part. Jews represented the city, the dangerous cosmopolitan melting pot, the future threat to a glorified past. In the racist imagery, blacks represent the opposite: the primitive countryside, potentially violent if not controlled, but in principle good-natured. Unchecked, both Jews and blacks, however, constitute an imagined threat to European values. The stress on the ordered life during unsettling wars and economic depressions explains the subjective vigor with which the racist stereotypes were and still are pursued.

In all Western countries, attitudes toward minorities, immigrants and the poor have also hardened, particularly in regard to spending money on them or creating equal opportunities. For instance, in a July 1994 US survey, a majority of whites (51%) believed that equal rights for racial minorities have been pushed too far, up from 42% two years earlier.[18] 82% of US residents believe that people moving to the US to live should be subjected to more restrictions and controls. An economically motivated intolerance seems to have replaced traditional bigotry because the same respondents display greater approval of post-modern lifestyles. A record 65% of US whites approved of cross-racial dating — up from 47% in 1987. 60% denied school boards the right to fire teachers who are known homosexuals, up from 42% in 1987. As long as altruism does not threaten jobs or wallets, respondents are less interested in enforcing a traditional moral order against outsiders.

Explaining Genocide

Anti-Semites consider Jews cancerous parasites. In its extreme form, these outcasts become so dehumanized in the perception of prosecutors that emotional attitudes of hate or fear hardly apply. The other is a dangerous object to be eliminated rather than hated. In the case of colonial racism, the European supremacists *despise* their subordinates. Their

18. *Globe and Mail* (September 21, 1994), p. A9.

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dominant attitude is one of tolerant dismissiveness, bordering on contempt, mixed with pity and, occasionally, even guilt. At all times, master and servant engage each other emotionally. With this emotional investment, the Afrikaner farmer can be extremely kind to his faceless laborers and brutalize them at the same time. They are bound in a relation that does not exist between the anti-Semite and his victims. Jews are considered so alien, so far beyond the bonds of common humanity, that the Treblinka guards merely did their job when herding naked women and children into the gas showers. Like a surgeon who cold-bloodedly excises a sore, the SS guards "cleansed" the body politic of unwanted "material." Rare non-police killings of blacks by pathological whites in South Africa always involved an emotional act. One of the AWB bombers broke down and cried when confronted with his carnage. Very few SS officers asked for a transfer from their morbid activities.[19]

It would be wrong, however, to consider the average SS guards sadists, as Hollywood always portrays them. Sadism implies enjoyment of cruelty. Eichman was neither sadistic nor even pathologically anti-Semitic. Only his obsession to impress authority figures by his efficient work marks him as a deviant. The banality that Hannah Arendt diagnosed in Eichman's mentality also characterized his underlings: normal human beings with the average range of feelings. It was the coldly planned industrialized genocide that distinguished the Holocaust from other types of extermination. All other historical genocides occurred in the context of wars, colonial conquests or disputes over land and resources.

Enrichment was more of a side effect rather than the prime purpose of the Nazis' obsession with Jews. It was a purposeless, irrational killing. This distinguished the Holocaust from medieval pogroms. Then, killing Jews was frequently instigated by the desire to get rid of debtors. The 0.3% of Jews in the German population of 1933 hardly possessed sufficient wealth or other resources to make their acquisition a prime motive for the killings — individual NS looters notwithstanding. On the contrary,

19. When former killer commander, Dirk Coetzee, was questioned by the Amnesty Committee of the Truth Commission as to why two of his victims had been poisoned and allowed to suffer the ill effects over days rather than being shot immediately, Coetzee replied "it had been hard to look someone in the eye who was stone cold sober knowing one was about to kill them." The killers of the Nazi regime felt no such morbid scruples. In a similar South African police killing, the two victims were asked whether they had a last wish or wanted to say anything. One of them cried and pleaded for mercy and the perpetrators despised him. The other captive wished to sing the national anthem a last time and was allowed to do so while his killers expressed admiration for such a brave stance.

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rounding up Jews all over Nazi-occupied Europe diverted considerable resources from the German war effort, particularly in Eastern Europe. Here, the advancing and retreating *Wehrmacht* was engaged more frequently in shooting poor *Ostjuden* than engaging Stalin's army. Therefore, materialist explanations of the Holocaust miss its ideological dimension.

Equally problematic is the insistence that the Holocaust was part of a series of unfortunate genocides and oppressions throughout history. Concentration camps were not primarily a form of "industrialized slavery," as Pierre van den Berghe states. Since 1941, in the aftermath of the Wannsee conference, 90% of the human freight to Auschwitz landed immediately in the gas chambers, not in the adjoining IG Farben compounds. Unlike in the case of slavery, the main thrust of Nazi persecution was extermination, not exploitation. In conclusion, the Nazis fought a war against a generalized "international Jewry." Blacks, on the other hand, merely had to be kept at bay, in order to preserve the purity of the race. In the Nazi perception, Jews had already polluted the spirit and finance of the Aryan world. They had to be eradicated and prevented from causing further damage to a threatened nation.[20] This *imagined threat*, out of all proportion to the real importance of Jews in the lives of nations, has never applied to anti-black racism. At most, blacks have to be prevented from contaminating the nation through "Mixed Marriage Acts" and "Immorality Laws." In the racist view, blacks may lust after white women (and vice versa) but are not credited with the ability to engage in a conspiracy to rule the world. Where entire indigenous communities were wiped out in colonial conquests, they were not killed for religious reasons. Perhaps they were not even considered worthy of a legitimating ideology to rationalize their conquest.

German historians have argued that the genocide of the Hereroes by the German colonial army in then South West Africa foreshadowed the Holocaust 40 years later. Nonetheless, colonial genocide as a dry run for the Jewish killings in the Nazi period seems problematic because it lacked the ideologically-driven irrationality. While a brutalized military may already have acted out a brutalized German national character, similar

20. Shmuel Ettinger points to the sacred duty of the church to define a separate legal status for Jews during the Middle Ages and the occasional wiping out of entire Jewish communities. "But even in those periods, never was the opinion sounded (as it is by modern anti-Semites) that the fate of nations — of the world, even — depends on their attitude to the Jews and on their definition of the Jews' status among them." See his "The Origins of Modern Antisemitism," in Yisrael Gutman and Livia Rothkirchen eds., *The Catastrophe of European Jewry* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1976), pp. 3-39.

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atrocities were perpetrated by other colonial armies (e.g., the massacre of Amritsar).[21] The unique aspects of the Holocaust lies in (a) its targetting of a minority that constituted no real threat, and (b) genocide outside the context of civil war or conquest.

Religious Hatred?

Various forms of anti-Semitism should be distinguished. The classical religious anti-Judaism of orthodox Catholicism differs from Nazi anti-Semitism, which in turn was not typical of other forms of fascism. Mussolini and Franco did not share Hitler's obsession with Jews.[22] The "anti-Christ" image of Jews as infidels and betrayers of Jesus undoubtedly fed into the indifference and ambivalence of the general population toward Jews. "They brought it upon themselves," as the stereotype goes. Perhaps the more a united world of Christendom was faced with heretics and non-believers during the Renaissance and the Reformation, the more the Jews served as evidence of the living truth of the Christian faith. As Ettinger put it: "Their degradation and oppression would convey the point that external punishment is suffered by those who dare to reject the revealed redeemer."[23] To medieval Christians, Judas Iscariot was the wicked betrayer of principles, the Jew incarnate. In medieval stereotypes, Jews had rejected Christ and aligned themselves with Satan. They practiced witchcraft. Therefore, they represented the forces of darkness and evil. In contrast, blacks engaged in witchcraft out of ignorance. Their pagan souls begged to be saved by dedicated missionaries. Once saddled with the label "others" and "different," anti-Semitic mobilizers found a fertile ground to set up Jews as targets for exclusion. Given the long history of anti-Semitism in the West, Nazis carried a long tradition to its extreme.

The Jewish cultural heritage of Christianity obviously played a crucial part in perpetuating the stereotypical image of the minority, even in countries and periods where there were no Jews. Religiously inspired hate, however, should have declined with secularization. Instead, anti-Semitism

21. As Steven Katz demonstrates, each atrocity had distinct roots and resists simplistic generalizations. See his *The Holocaust in Historical Context* (London: Oxford University Press, 1994).

22. Eric J. Hobsbawn dates the racialization of anti-Jewish sentiment to the late 19th century, after Darwinian evolutionism was supplemented with genetics that provided racism with its pseudoscientific gloss. "Anti-Semitism did not acquire a 'racial' (as distinct from a religio-cultural) character until about 1880 . . ." See his *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 108.

23. Ettinger, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

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has increased with the Enlightenment. Indeed, Jews are blamed for all of modernity's ills. Hatred of Jews goes beyond being an invention of Christianity. It merely provided the pretext for stigmatizing a minority. In principle, however, Jews as a target remain interchangeable. Homophobia, for example, fulfills the same psychic functions. Jews and gays represent imagined threats to an established moral order.

Anti-Semitism is an age-old part of an entire Western tradition, not a German aberration. The indifference of the Allies toward refugees from Nazi-occupied Europe — from the UK to liberal Canada — constitutes a well-known part of the ingrained anti-Semitic strain. Thus, "None is too many," was the slogan with which Canadian politicians rejected pleas for admission from European Jewish asylum seekers. Nobody will know how many lives in the extermination camps could have been saved, had the Allied air force bombed the railways on which the freight cars shuttled their victims to Poland. The failure to come to the rescue of a racially defined section of humanity — although technically feasible and only explicable as lack of political will — constitutes a lasting indictment of Western liberalism.[24] Nazi anti-Semitism merely perfected an ingrained disposition in Western societies (conservatives, liberals and socialists alike) similar to the way in which the Afrikaner state enshrined a long tradition of English informal racial discrimination into formal Apartheid. However, social conditions and historical circumstances differ vastly. While the latent potential for racial mobilization and exclusion persists almost everywhere, a variety of factors determine whether the population is susceptible to the tunes of agitators.

The major difference between anti-Semitic and anti-black racism lies in its greater socio-psychological functions in the former and the heavier economic and political constraints on anti-black racism in the colonies. Having to work with a numerically larger indigenous population on whose labor the colonial economy depends forces pragmatic limitations on racial ruthlessness. Those structural exigencies also translate into internalized attitudes over time. In short, while the anti-Semite can afford to annihilate the other, the colonist is bound to his subordinates. Not only did their numerical strength and resistance prevent genocide, but the conquered are indispensable for the conquerors while Jews were not. The lat-

24. In this sense, because of the special circumstances of a wounded people or a nation of industrial latecomers, spurned by an irresistibly seductive leader, Nazi crimes do not qualify as an historical aberration. See Tony Kushner, *The Holocaust and the Liberal Imagination* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

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ter were an expendable minority, irrespective of their behaviors, similar to other marginalized outgroups such as gypsies, homosexuals or mentally disabled persons. Where colonial racism did not depend on the co-operation and labor of indigenous people, such as in the case of hunting and gathering societies, they were also decimated. Tasmania or Newfoundland were ethnically cleansed long before the concept became fashionable. The indigenous population of North America or Australia almost suffered the same fate through both physical and cultural extermination. In the African colonies, however, such genocidal colonialism toward formidable peasant societies proved unfeasible and counterproductive.

Capitalists and Communists as Subversives

As archetypical subversives, Jews could easily be associated with communism. As Marx was Jewish, as some Jews had played a role in overthrowing the Czar, and as many Jewish intellectuals were prominent on the Left, the association of Jews with Bolshevism personified the anxiety about a changing world order. Particularly in countries such as Apartheid South Africa, where most immigrants from Eastern Europe were Jewish, suspicion and antipathy were fuelled by this labelling. As Shain points out, for the fledgling Afrikaner Nationalists in the 1930s, the Jew "symbolized all that was foreign and oppressive."[25] Here was an alien group that could be singled out as the unassailable enemy of the national aspirations of a downtrodden people despite the friendly attitudes toward Jewish traders visiting farms. This happened in almost all Western nationalist movements, from Czech to Québec separatism. More than the anti-Christian imagery or even the ideological affinity of 1930s nationalism around the world with Nazism, it was the contradictory stereotype of the Jewish exploiter that made anti-Semitism so appealing. The anti-Semite could easily reconcile the imagery of Bolshevism and capitalism in the common denominator of a political enemy to the emerging nationalist identity. Whether Jews were portrayed as supercapitalist exploiters ("Hoggenheimer"), deceitful traders and creditors with a questionable commercial morality, on the one hand, or as union organizers for the socialist cause, on the other, their activity combined to undermine the nationalist cause. Jews served an allegedly cosmopolitan cause — whether global capitalism or socialism.

While Jews were painted as alien exploiters, in the colonies blacks were perceived as inferior competitors by the European working class. In the vision of Afrikaner nationalists, blacks had be to protected from

25. Shain, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

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English-Jewish machinations, designed to thwart Afrikaner goals. Blacks were considered too weak or too naïve to withstand being used. Without legislation ensuring appropriate labor relations, Afrikaner nationalists correctly argued, the mining houses would prefer cheaper black labor over more troublesome Afrikaner workers. Hence, job reservation and "civilized labor policies" had to be imposed on "English-Jewish capitalists," in the interest of protecting white standards from falling to native levels. At the same time, it was also deemed necessary to protect the impressionable African psyche from foreign influences, be it missionary education or liberals and Jewish communists at English-language universities. Hence, bush colleges were established since the mid-1960s where most of the teaching staff came from the Afrikaner civil service. There blacks were supposed to develop their own culture in hermetic isolation from the outside world. Little did the initiators of the tribal universities envisage the backlash in the form of the Black Consciousness Movement that aimed at psychological liberation from liberal and Afrikaner dominance alike. Jews were conceived as the embodiment of decadent Western liberalism. In this role they already dominated the English universities. "Noble savages" were to be immunized against this contamination by being made proud of their own culture.

In the "terrorist ANC" before 1990, Jewish communism and African nationalism had already merged in the "total onslaught." If they could only be separated, Apartheid South Africa could be saved. Without the Slovos, Kasrils and Sachs (all Jewish) as mentors and instigators, the average white South African thought, blacks would be quite content with their assigned place. Moreover, they would be incapable of really threatening Pretoria, were it not for foreign assistance, aided by the moral exhortation of an Oppenheimer-controlled press and Jewish do-gooders such as Helen Suzman. Thus, it is ironic that in post-Apartheid South Africa white anti-Semitism has been replaced by occasional black stereotyping of Jews. Cosatu shop stewards' frequent attacks against "Jewish bosses" compete with Islamic solidarity with Palestinians in denouncing the 80,000 South African Jews as loyal to foreign rather than native interests. "Kill the Jews" and "Death to America" were the slogans as a crowd of Muslims moved on the Israeli embassy in Cape Town to burn the Star of David in March 1995. While some progressive Muslims disassociated themselves from such intolerance, no official condemnation was issued by the ANC government or other opinion-leaders.

A second irony lies in the fact that South Africa's peaceful transformation was saved in the end by the moderation of Slovo's SACP that allegedly sought to destroy the last bastion of Christian civilization. Indeed,

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without the SACP's ingrained nonracialism, together with its push for reconciliation, power-sharing and economic accommodation, African nationalism may well have dominated within the ANC. The great surprise for the South African racists was the ANC's policy of reconciliation. The threatening Mandela changed into a savior before incredulous eyes. More democratic and nonracial than its Apartheid oppressors, the ANC suddenly turned all stereotypes about blacks on its head. Asked about recent developments, the almost unanimous answer of South African whites reveals the bewilderment: "So far, it went far better than ever expected." Only the metaphor of a miracle can "explain" what was not expected to happen in the first place: that the "semi-animals" (Herbert Vilakazi) do not seek revenge for being incarcerated and abused for so long.

Racism and Social Distance

Michael Ignatieff has observed that nationalism is at its most ferocious "where the group you are defining yourself against most closely resembles you."[26] Atrocities among neighbors baffle rational explanations. Indeed, Serbs and Croats speak the same language. Bosnian Serbs consider Bosnian Muslims as forcibly converted Serbs in disguise. The difference between an Irish Republican and an Ulster Protestant is only visible to the insider. Sephardic Jews and Palestinians are both Orientals in customs and lifestyle and cannot be distinguished from each other at first sight, yet many in each group consider their counterpart mortal enemies. The correlation between violence and likeness also seems to be confirmed by the contrasting South African case. Here, the conflict *within* black and *within* white factions is far more intense than the relative minor racial violence between blacks and whites. Despite Apartheid oppression, counterracism on the part of the victims of white racism always remained suprisingly weak. Blacks and whites do not seem to hate each other. Race relations in South Africa are far better than in other divided societies.

An explanation of this paradox must go beyond the popular psychology that hate among kin exceeds contempt for strangers because "hatred is a form of love turned against itself."[27] Psychoanalysis views rejection of others as resulting from projection of one's own dangerous impulses onto outsiders. This mechanism succeeds best when the other resembles oneself. Visible racial differences usually make for great social distance but

26. Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism* (Toronto: Penguin Viking, 1993), pp. 185-86.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 186.

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hardly generate the nationalist fervor that views the other as the cause of one's downfall. Colonial racism is based more on social distance than on fear or hate. In the colonial situation, the racist sees himself as superior. This superiority does not lend itself to envy, which is a powerful motivator in nationalist mobilization and anti-Semitism.

Likeness also sheds light on the difference between Nazi anti-Semitism and anti-black racism. Supremacists the world over want to put blacks in their place but seek to stop Jews from living altogether. People of color are despised as incompetent and lazy, but Jews are considered to be too clever, engaged in a grand conspiracy to control the world. Supremacists feel threatened by a tiny minority of Jews but not by a majority of blacks. It was because European Jews were so well integrated in their host society — as "German" as their tormentors — that the invisibles were made visible as scapegoats. Along with other minorities, Jews, are denounced as clannish, aloof and distant but, at the same time, they are also accused of sneaking in disguise to hide subversive activities. The embodiment of a cheat is portrayed as both weak and strong. This contradiction is best communicated with the metaphor of a parasitic vermin. The dehumanized other is dangerous to the body politic if not watched, yet the virus can be stamped out with vigilance and ideological protection. Mobilized against a poisonous cancer, every right-minded citizen has a duty to be as watchful as in the cure for individual health.

There are elements of a manufactured threat also in the perception of blacks by whites. For example, Africans are frequently equated with snakes that can bite, unexpectedly, the hand that feeds them. Therefore, segregation and social distance should be adopted as precautions. Overwhelmingly, however, the colonial mind denigrates the conquered other as "semi-animal" in the evolutionary hierarchy. Primitive, wild, sexually permissive and uncontrollable in their breeding, the semi-animal has be to tamed. An early Apartheid edict defined Bantu education as an attempt to stop blacks from wanting "to graze" in white areas. To this day, mine management characterizes its migrant workers informally as "raw" natives. A strong hand and authoritarian rule can easily achieve this task, unlike the much more complex measures necessary toward smart Jews, who are out to control the world through money and Hollywood manipulation. Black male bodies are portrayed as physically strong, unspoiled examples of natural beauty. To this day, South African tourist advertisements display bare-breasted Zulu maidens in the same ways Leni Riefenstahl — the superb creator of Nazi aesthetics — in her later period glorified perfect Nubian

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bodies. Jewish bodies, on the other hand, are always caricatured as shrunken, bent, hook-nosed examples of degenerate brains.

The anti-Semitic supremacist sees his moral order undermined from within; the anti-black racist condescendingly stands on guard against "the return of the bush" from without. Therefore, the neocolonial attitude toward Africa borders on pity and charity. So-called underdeveloped and inherently violent people are encouraged to adapt civilized rules. According to anti-Semites, Jews are overdeveloped and their wings have to be clipped. The dichotomy between superior Jews and inferior blacks as two sides of the racist coin can be illustrated with the treatment of artistic representations ascribed to the two outcasts. The Nazis distinguished between "healthy" (German) art and degenerate (Jewish/alien) art. No clear criteria existed for this arbitrary distinction, emanating from the whims of leaders and the expectations of a philistine public. In this judgment, the degenerate art bordered on the insane. It contradicted *gesunde Volksempfinden* (healthy popular sentiment) nowadays called nebulously "community standards."

While Jews were depicted as cultivating an overdeveloped, mad imagination, blacks were perceived as possessing an underdeveloped, primitive art. Allegedly, bushman paintings and Michelangelo frescos could not be compared. For the extreme racist, blacks were incapable of artistic performance altogether, save drumming, dancing and singing as part of their natural character. The Nazis even considered the complex jazz of African Americans a primitive import, in contrast with the classical symphonies of European composers. Where were the great black painters, writers or architects that a rich European tradition had produced? If slavery and colonialism had destroyed indigenous culture, where was the evidence of art from pre-colonial times? Such Eurocentric questioning not only displayed ignorance about the survival conditions of hunting and gathering societies and the material technology and social arrangements in subsistence economies, but disregarded a rich oral tradition. For example, it insisted on a Zulu Tolstoy as a precondition for taking Zulu culture seriously. Nowadays the frantic search for township painters in South Africa or the successful marketing of indigenous airport art the world over merely represents the other side of the same coin. Political correctness now demands ethnicizing fashions and home furnishings as displays of nonracial relativism — regardless of quality.

Coping with Racism

Reactions of the targets of anti-Semitic and anti-black racism also differed widely. Much has been written about the Jewish "lack of prescience

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as to their dismal future."[28] As Max Horkheimer remarked, so integrated and assimilated were German Jews that the worst anti-Semitism occurred in the society that was the least anti-Semitic. German citizens who had fought patriotically in WWI had long converted to Christianity or abandoned Judaism for a secular agnosticism. They simply could not anticipate that they would be singled out on the basis of ancestry for having had one Jewish grandparent. The relative lack of resistance that haunts survivors and descendants in Israel alike has not characterized victims of anti-black racism. The physical difference, the segregation and social distance that accompanied even the most paternalistic colonial racism always sustained a consciousness of difference. While blacks have internalized the definitions of their oppressors to various degrees at various times, a colonial hegemony has not been achieved anywhere. In the US, the uprooted slaves obviously found it more difficult to establish a separate cultural identity in an all pervasive consumer culture than people subjugated on their own territory and in possession of their own language and ethnic traditions as in South Africa. Covert resistance against unfair treatment characterized racial contact from the days of the early Cape Colony.

A consciousness of watchful skepticism toward the designs of the superordinate always marked the subordinates' attitudes in the colonial context. Distrust of promises of liberation shaped political activists' minds, quite apart from the fact that the option of assimilation was not available to non-whites. Thus the Apartheid system allowed South African Jews full integration as whites, while slightly darker middlemen groups who were similarly stereotyped, such as South African Indians, were increasingly segregated. When scapegoat minorities come to occupy specialized economic positions, they serve as ready targets for the less fortunate majority population. Like Jews, Asians in East and South Africa, Armenians in Turkey, Chinese in Malaysia or Vietnam, and Lebanese in West Africa form so-called middlemen minorities on the basis of their dominant role in distinct economic activities. Without the political power and the network of social connections of the culturally different majority, these trading minorities find themselves in a tenuous position, despite common citizenship and attempts at political identification with the majority. Their insecurity also leads to frequent alternative life planning (children's education abroad, foreign accounts, bribery), which in turn gives rise to accusations of disloyalty

28. This is how Michael Burleigh has characterized the dominant attitudes of Austro-German Jewry in a review of recent Holocaust literature. See his "Synonymous with Murder — Survivors' and Historians' perspectives on the Holocaust," in *TLS* (March 3, 1995).

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from the dominant group. It is the weakness of middlemen minorities that has led to the worst state atrocities against these tenuously placed ethnic outsiders, of which Jews are the classic example.

In light of this structural ambiguity, scapegoat/middlemen minorities have tended to cultivate cultural narcissism when faced with hostility. Exclusivism, endogamy, self-help, and cultural revivalism become the armor that permits them to survive in a hostile environment. These communities have acquired few psychological scars. They have immunized themselves, so to speak, from the outside stigmatization by withdrawing into their own psychological and material world. The success stories of Indians in South Africa, of Palestinians in the Gulf states, and of Chinese migrants in South Asia bear testimony to a remarkable adaptation despite racism and intense discrimination. In short, it is not so much the cultural tradition of a group as the social environment, epitomized in state policies, that activates or lays to rest cultural heritage. In summary, like Jews in the diaspora, scapegoated middlemen minorities have, through their cultural strength, partially succeeded in overcoming discrimination, despite a hostile social environment.

In post-Apartheid South African cities, urbanized blacks also display little of the deference toward whites, the fawning over and obsequiousness that guided widespread slave survival in paternalistic race relations in the US South. Nor are South African blacks inspired by an obsessive search for identity, conversion to a liberating Islam, or pilgrimages to African roots that make the headlines among an atomized black population in the US. Africans in South Africa know their roots — they never lost them — and therefore they need not partake in the reiteration of black values and the lament about loss and neglect. Above all, black self-respect is reinforced by majority status and political power that their US counterparts lack. A most intriguing question, therefore, concerns the behavior of anti-black racists when power relations are reversed. No Nazi would have ever served under a Jewish president. Nazi-Jewish powersharing would have been inconceivable, even under the most trying circumstances. Nazi ideology could not liberalize itself as other totalitarian and authoritarian systems successfully did when pressed. While Nazism as an irrational ideology at its core bore the seeds of its own destruction, colonial racism, even in its elaborated Apartheid application, adapted to new realities.

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Lester Frank Ward: The Philosopher of the Welfare State

Stephen J. Sniegoski

A basic argument to justify state control of American education in the 19th century was that public education could and should improve society. This view is usually associated with Horace Mann and other advocates of the common school. It was best articulated by Lester Frank Ward, who, along with Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer, was one of the founders of sociology. Ward viewed public education as the key to transforming American society from individualism to collectivism, which is why Henry Steele Commager considers him the "philosophical architect of the welfare state."[1]

The Education of a Materialist

Born in 1841 in Joliet, Illinois, the youngest of ten children, Ward grew up in humble circumstances. His father was a footloose mechanic who moved the family about in what was then America's western frontier — Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa. Thus it was necessary for the young Lester to toil on the farms and in the mills to supplement the family's meager income. Although his work left him little time for formal schooling, he had a massive appetite for learning, mastering the fundamentals of biology, physiology, French, German, Latin, and Greek. By time he was in

1. Henry Steele Commager, ed., *Lester Ward and the Welfare State* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1967), p. xxxviii. Ralph H. Gabriel similarly wrote: "More than any other single individual, Ward formulated the basic pattern of the American concept of the planned society." See his *The Course of American Democratic Thought*, 3rd ed. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), p. 215. For a similar view, see George C. Roche, *The Bewildered Society* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1972), p. 150: "Lester Ward is one of the patron saints of the modern American collective idea."

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his twenties, Ward's broad knowledge had put him well on the way to earning the sobriquet, "American Aristotle."[2] A fervent opponent of slavery, he enlisted in the Union army in 1862 and served until severe wounds at the Battle of Chancellorsville in 1863 led to his discharge.[3] Having recovered, in 1865 he entered the federal bureaucracy in Washington. After holding a few minor posts, in 1867 he obtained a position with the Bureau of Statistics. Here he developed his belief in the vital significance of positive government action, coming to view the Bureau as the model for all "scientific lawmaking." Never one to be modest about his own accomplishments, Ward considered his compilation of immigration statistics "the most important information on the subject that had ever been published in this country."[4]

For the heretofore intellectually isolated Ward, Washington provided the ideal milieu in which to make contact and exchange ideas with other intellectuals. His close association with Major John Wesley Powell, director of the US Geological and Geographical Survey, enabled him to obtain the position as chief paleobotanist of the US Geological Survey in 1881. Working under Powell, whom Ward held in the highest esteem, further confirmed his faith in the paramount importance of an activist, scientifically-oriented government.[5] Ward remained with the US Geological Survey, during which time he not only did an immense amount of research on American natural science but also entered Columbian College (now George Washington University) and received a B.A. in 1870 and an M.A. in 1872.

It was in his spare time that the encyclopedic Ward engaged in research and writing in sociology. In 1869 he started his *magnum opus*, *Dynamic Sociology*, published in 1883. *Psychic Factors in Civilization* came out in 1893, followed by *Outlines of Sociology* (1898), *Pure Sociology* (1903), and *Applied Sociology* (1906). As a result of these publications, Ward gained national and international recognition. In 1903, he was presented with France's highest award in education, the honorary degree of Officer of Public Education. At that time he also served as president of the Interna-

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2. Samuel Chugerman, *Lester F. Ward: The American Aristotle* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1939), pp. 173-74.

3. For biographical information on Ward, see Clifford H. Scott, *Lester Frank Ward* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976), pp. 13-41.

4. Lester F. Ward, *Glimpses of the Cosmos*, Vol. 1 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1913), p. 182.

5. Ward dedicated *Dynamic Sociology* to Powell. See Wilfred M. McClay, *The Masterless: Self and Society in Modern America* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), p. 125.

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tional Institute of Sociology at its Paris meeting, and in 1905 he became the first president of the American Sociological Society. After retiring from the federal government, Ward accepted the newly-created chair of sociology at Brown University, where he remained until his death in 1913. The course Ward taught at Brown had the ambitious title: "An Outline of All Knowledge."[6]

Like many social scientists at the time, Ward was captivated by the rapid advances in the natural sciences and considered himself a materialist. To Ward, "The only reality is matter," and anything not matter is "some relation between the discrete parts of matter."[7] Matter, in Ward's view, was not inert but suffused with a cosmic energy that meant continuous change. Human activity was simply a part of this material universe. As such, Ward was a philosophical monist.[8] Only science could provide an understanding of the universe, of which man's thoughts and actions were a part. "No important proposition should be deemed to have been satisfactorily established until it has been subjected to the test of a thorough scientific analysis and found to be based upon either some tangible material *thing* or object, cognizable by the senses, or upon some certain natural law, established by inductive experiment, or else upon some real *fact*, or physical change, actually known by sensual demonstration to have taken place in such matter by the operation of such law."[9] In Ward's view, "all real knowledge is science."[10] "Everything capable of forming a distinct intellectual conception is reducible to a place under some one of the scientific categories."[11]

Rejecting all supernatural explanations of the universe, Ward identified supernatural religion as a formidable barrier to science.[12] "Science is the great Iconoclast," wrote Ward in 1870. "Our civilization depends

6. James Q. Dealy, "Lester Frank Ward," in *American Masters of Social Science*, Howard W. Odum, ed. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1927), p. 81.

7. Lester F. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology: or Applied Social Science*, Vol. 2, 2nd edition (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1907), pp. 7, 231.

8. Chugerman, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-57.

9. *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 527.

10. Lester F. Ward, *Applied Sociology: A Treatise on the Conscious Improvement of Society by Society* (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1906), p. 103; Similarly, Ward wrote: "The only real knowledge is knowledge of *nature*. The only important knowledge is science." Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

11. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

12. Ward wrote: "In short, the false cosmogonies that have most impeded the progress of truth have formed an integral part of the religious systems of the world." Lester F. Ward, *Pure Sociology: A Treatise on the Origin and Spontaneous Development of Society*, 2nd ed.(New York: MacMillan Company, 1921), p. 506.

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wholly upon the discovery and application of a few profound scientific and philosophical principles, thought out by a few great minds who hold those babble of priests in utter contempt, and have no time to dabble in theology."[13] That Ward would tone down his open hostility to religion in his later writings did not alter his continued intellectual opposition.

His repudiation of supernatural religion notwithstanding, Ward held the religious impulse in high regard and thought science led to a quasi-religious reverence for the innate dynamism of the material universe. "This eternal pelting of atoms, this driving of the elements, this pressure at every point, this struggle of all created things, this universal nisus of nature, pushing into existence all material forms and storing itself up in them as properties, as life, as feeling, as thought . . . . it is the soul of the universe, the spirit of nature, the 'First Cause' of both religion and science — it is God."[14] Ward's reverence did not stop with a contemplation of the oneness of everything but entailed personally aiding human progress, thus melding one's personality with the evolutionary process.[15] Ward sought to construct a comprehensive sociology that would facilitate the improvement of the human condition. His ultimate aim was happiness, which he defined as an excess of pleasure over pain. Happiness was the "realization of all the positive forms of feeling, attended by a more or less complete absence of the negative forms, known as pain."[16]

Social Science over Social Darwinism

American society in the second half of the 19th century was characterized by the rapid growth of business and industry. The ideological legitimation of this business-oriented society was provided by Social Darwinism, best represented by Herbert Spencer and his American disciple, William Graham Sumner. This ideology preached the inevitability of social progress through individual competition. *Laissez-faire* in society was portrayed as analogous to the Darwinian struggle for survival in nature —

13. This passage came from the August 1870 issue of *The Iconoclast*, a journal Ward edited and largely wrote. See Ward, *Glimpses of the Cosmos*, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

14. Ward, *Pure Sociology*, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

15. Chugerman, *op. cit.*, p. 256. Ward envisioned science replacing religion in the future as humanity's guide. "The day will come when every church spire will loom up as a center of education. Every bit of knowledge shall be offered to all, and we may call them 'Halls of Science'." Quoted in Emily Palmer Cape, *Lester Frank Ward, a Personal Sketch* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1922), p. 106.

16. *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

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competition in both induced progress. Social progress was as much a result of natural forces as evolution in nature and, like natural evolution, human progress was unplanned. Thus Social Darwinism rejected collectivist, government-directed reforms on the grounds that government attempts to direct social progress would be counterproductive, impeding individual initiative expressed freely in the natural competitive state of society.[17] From the perspective of Social Darwinism, the role of the social scientist was to observe society. But Ward was not content to limit his science to a cold and detached social analysis. In his view, "The problem of social science is to point out in what way the most complete and universal satisfaction of human desires can be attained."[18] A science unable to aid in human betterment, "however agreeable its study, is lifeless."[19]

Materialism notwithstanding, Ward believed that the existence of mind made society radically different from the rest of nature. Intelligence was a product of biological evolution, but it gave human beings the ability to alter their condition in a conscious, purposeful way. Consequently, society did not have to rely on the slow, wastefully unplanned effects of natural selection to achieve progress. Humanity was not merely the passive subject of natural laws, as the Social Darwinists assumed, but the master of its fate, capable of consciously directing its own improvement. The crux of this worldview was the superiority of purposeful, human-directed "telic" processes over natural ("genetic") ones.[20] Telesis was not purpose alone but included the knowledge of how that purpose could be achieved. Ward held that before the advent of modern science such knowledge did not exist. Human progress had to rely on the blind forces of nature. But the emergence of science had provided humanity with the means to transcend slow-paced natural progress and to plan its own improvement.[21]

To Ward, the social sciences attained knowledge of the "laws of nature" just as did the natural sciences and "the mission of social science

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17. On Social Darwinism, see Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, rev. ed. (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1959).

18. Lester F. Ward, *The Psychic Factors of Civilization*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1906), p. 74.

19. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. xxvii.

20. Herman Schwendinger and Julia R. Schwendinger, *The Sociologists of the Chair: A Radical Analysis of the Formative Years of North American Sociology (1883-1922)* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), pp. 176-77. According to Cremin, Ward sought to "transform the harsh Spencerian doctrine of social Darwinism into a full-fledged philosophy of meliorism." See Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957* (New York: Knopf, 1961), p. 99.

21. Dealy, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

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is to do away with error and replace it by truth."[22] Moreover, in his view, it was man as a collective entity — not man as an individual — who was crucial for progress. Private individuals could only work for their own personal advancement, which could bring about technical, academic and scientific achievement but little improvement for society as a whole. So far society had realized only minimal social improvement from the great strides in science and technology: "The reason why achievement produces so little effect is that it is not appropriated by society."[23] Social science was not being used to improve society; in fact, the great bulk of the population was unaware of the truths of science. Ward envisioned immense social improvement if society acted as a collective entity to apply scientific principles. Rejecting *laissez-faire* as inefficient, he lauded government intervention (in which he, as a government civil servant, participated) and saw in history an irreversible trend toward increasingly greater government involvement in social and economic affairs.[24] The ever-expanding role of government, Ward averred, paralleled the increasing importance of the brain in the evolution of organic life. Social evolution entailed increasing direction of the social body by its brain — the government.[25]

Education for the Masses

Latter 19th century America witnessed strong demands for social change. Thus the populists believed that if the will of the people could prevail — in contrast to that of bankers, railroad magnates, and industrial monopolists — social reform would automatically spring forth. Radical socialists claimed that positive social change could be attained only by a revolutionary overturning of the capitalistic economic structure. Ward, in contrast, saw neither reform nor revolution as possible in existing American society because the vast majority of the American people seemed satisfied with the *status quo*. This included the poor, whom Ward perceived

22. *Ibid.*, p. 80. Social science "stands at the summit of the scale of great sciences . . . according to the law of evolutionary progress. . . . This fairly complete mastery of the dynamic and directive agents of society has placed sociology in a position to deal in a thoroughly scientific way with all the facts and phenomena of society." See Lester F. Ward, *Glimpses of the Cosmos*, Vol. 6 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1918), p. 264.

23. Ward, *Applied Sociology*, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

24. Ward claimed that "of all the enterprises which the state has thus appropriated to itself, there is not one which it has not managed better and more wisely than it had been managed before by private parties." Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 579.

25. Schwendinger and Schwendinger, *The Sociologists of the Chair*, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

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as too ignorant to realize their class interest. "The lower classes are so unintelligent, maladroit, unorganized, and generally inefficient that they cannot formulate a rational demand, and have no idea how to proceed in the effort to secure what they want."[26] Before seeking social and economic change, it was first necessary to alter the climate of opinion. "The general conduct of mankind is determined by the *opinions* held, and without changing those opinions it is wholly impossible perceptibly to change such conduct. . . . Instill progressive principles, no matter how, into the mind, and progressive actions will result."[27]

In Ward's view, the reason why extant scientific knowledge had so far failed to bring about a concomitant improvement of society was that it was limited to a very few people, primarily of the upper class, who held a monopoly of knowledge as well as material wealth. The upper class had a vested interested in using this knowledge to preserve the *status quo*, not to change it. "There are a thousand subtle ways," Ward asserted, "in which the superior knowledge of the capitalist operates to reduce the inferior intelligence of the laborer to his service."[28] Given the incompetence of the lower class, Ward even considered their domination as necessary for their own good. Members of the lower class "could not take care of themselves without the help of a sort of master, and although they may be in a country which does not allow slavery, they are virtually slaves."[29]

Social improvement required the diffusion of knowledge to the ignorant masses, whom Ward saw as a great reservoir of untapped intellectual capacity. Spencer and the social Darwinists regarded the existing class system as the result of natural selection: the more able had gravitated to the top, the inferior to the bottom. Although acknowledging the existence of inherent differences in ability among individuals, Ward rejected any correlation between socioeconomic class and innate intelligence. The lower class' deficiency did not mean it lacked the intellectual potential to acquire knowledge. "An equal number, selected wholly at random from among the lower, middle and higher classes, would, if placed under like conditions, evince equal average native ability for acquiring knowledge."[30] The apparent superior knowledge of the upper class was solely a result of environmental advantages.[31] Furthermore, he

26. Ward, *Applied Sociology*, *op. cit.*, p. 93.
27. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 547.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 602.
29. Ward, *Applied Sociology*, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
30. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 475.
31. Schwendinger and Schwendinger, *The Sociologists of the Chair*, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

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claimed that scientific truth could be comprehended by individuals of normal intelligence, not just by the intellectually-gifted. "Any truth that is so subtle or involved that it cannot be grasped not only by the average mind but by minds of the minimum power, provided their interest and attention can be concentrated upon it, is likely to be of little practical value as a guide to conduct and an aid to success in life."[32]

Ward granted that knowledge could be acquired in various ways. Natural experience itself was educative, but knowledge obtained by this trial and error process was acquired too slowly. Even deliberate self-study was ineffective, because there was much worthless information and "few intellects can distinguish the chaff from the wheat, at least in youth, where the deepest impressions are made."[33] What was required was formal education — "An artificial system for the assorting of impressions, for causing their systematic presentation, for precluding the introduction of false ones and the drawing of erroneous inferences, is therefore absolutely necessary to the successful creation of progressive states of the human mind."[34] Ward regarded formal education "as a systematic process for the manufacture of correct opinions."[35] And such "Education is the mainspring of all progress. It is the piston of civilization."[36]

Public Education and Social Control

For Ward, formal education was too important to be left in private hands. It had to be the "exclusive work of society itself,"[37] which meant the government. "What society needs is the distribution of knowledge in its possession. This work cannot be trusted to individuals. It cannot be left to the discretion of children, parents, or teachers. It is not for any of these to say what knowledge is most useful to society. No tribunal short of that which society in its own sovereign capacity shall appoint is competent to decide this question."[38] Private schools were anathema to Ward because they had to cater to the whims of parents who had various unscientific notions about education, none of which

32. Ward, *Applied Sociology*, *op. cit.*, p. 103.
33. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 549.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 547.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 548.
36. Lester F. Ward, "Unpublished Manuscript on Education," p. 311, quoted in Elsa Peverly Kimball, *Sociology and Education: An Analysis of the Theories of Spencer and Ward* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), p. 216.
37. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 571.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 591.

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conformed to education's true purpose: "social improvement" and "making better citizens."[39] Parents were motivated by "some personal caprice, some parental pride or social emulation — an empty motive leading to a fruitless result."[40] In fact, Ward regarded private education as being worse than no education at all because it acted "to increase the inequality in the existing intelligence."[41] It was fortunate that "very little real knowledge can be conferred" by private schools, else social inequality would be even greater.[42]

Only state schools could address society's actual needs and "the result desired by the state is a wholly different one from that desired by parents, guardians, and pupils."[43] Free from the need to placate the whims of parents, teachers in state schools would have "time to plan true educational work."[44] But the teachers in Ward's proposed state school system would be far from free agents since the determination of educational methods would be the duty of the "supreme authority."[45] State schooling, Ward held, should be universal and compulsory. Recognizing the outright abhorrence many Americans would feel toward compulsory schooling as a violation of individual liberty, he hoped that government schooling would be as attractive as possible to encourage attendance. Most parents, he thought, would send their children to free public schools out of the "dictates of pecuniary interest," as opposed to paying tuition at private schools. But he acknowledged that some parents would not voluntarily send their children to school and would have to be compelled. One group would oppose the secular public schools on religious grounds, but Ward disregarded this group as "not sufficiently numerous to command respect."[46] A larger group opposed to schooling were the "poor and ignorant, who know nothing of education or its value."[47] This group "can not be expected to be competent to reason out what constitutes their true interests."[48] Ward emphasized that this poor group, mired in ignorance, needed formal education the most.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 589.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 589.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 588.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 588,
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 589-590.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 590.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 591.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 609.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 609.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 610.

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Consequently, it was essential for government to "exercise absolute control" over this poor class and force the young into public schools for their own good.[49]

Ward stressed the need for national control of the schools, as opposed to leaving power in the hands of states or localities. Centralized control would entail the maximum degree of uniformity. Regarding the school program, Ward held that the schools should "confer the maximum amount of the most important extant knowledge upon all members of society."[50] This emphasis on filling the mind with information contrasted with the dominant thinking of the mid-19th century that schools should focus on mental discipline. That approach stressed rigorous subject matter — the classical languages, mathematics — not primarily for their informational value but for their supposed ability to improve the capacity of the mind. Ward, however, did not identify with the various new methods of education that would fall under the rubric of progressive education. His emphasis on information differed substantially from John Dewey's concept of education as problem solving. Moreover, Ward rejected so-called natural methods of education because central to his worldview was the artificial nature of formal education. It was this very artificial nature (telic) that made it superior to natural (genetic) ways of acquiring knowledge.[51] Thus, he emphasized the importance of inculcating in students the natural and social laws discovered by science. But he did not provide a detailed outline of his proposed curriculum, which he regarded as an experimental question "to be solved gradually and tentatively."[52]

Ward did stress the importance of a standardized national curriculum to be established by "educational experts." During the early years of schooling, the curriculum would be the same for every child. In the secondary grades, the curriculum would be adjusted to the individual student's ability, but the students themselves would have no role in determining their studies. A student's school program would be formulated by teachers, who would rely on scientific aptitude tests for making decisions. Only at the university level did Ward allow for some measure of choice by students as to what they would study. The summit of Ward's centralized system of education would be a central university in

49. *Ibid.*, p. 610.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 619.
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 628-31.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 619.

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Washington for the brightest students. The graduates of this university would become members of the government elite, whose purpose was to direct the state.

Ward's espousal of educational uniformity rested not only on his belief in the ability of "educational experts" to determine a curriculum rooted in scientific truth, but also flowed inevitably from his quest for equal opportunity. The problem with the prevailing 19th century educational system, Ward believed, was not only its deficient program but also the unequal educational opportunities it afforded. By providing an educational environment commensurate to an individual's ability, he thought his educational system would establish equal opportunity, though he did not view individuals as intellectually equal. In his system, individuals would be able to advance according to their inherent mental capability. In essence, Ward's system would not lead to equality of condition but to a meritocracy — the best minds being needed to direct society. However, he assumed the inequalities in his system (reflecting natural inequalities) would be far less than the "artificial" inequalities in the existing society.[53]

Ward assumed that the greater opportunity for education in his system would allow new knowledge to be discovered at a much faster rate than in the past. He believed that new knowledge was created by original minds — those who could break new paths, invent new methods. Such original intellects would be few in number in any society, most people merely making use of existing knowledge, but many of these high caliber minds remained dormant and unproductive in traditional society because of lack of education. Ward looked upon the educational opportunity provided by his system as the optimal way to turn *potential* into *actual* genius.[54] He also thought that the acquisition of knowledge actually increased brain capacity: "The truth apprehended acts objectively upon the brain, and effects transformations and permanent alterations of tissue, gradually but slowly building up a better tissue."[55] Following Lamarckian theory, Ward believed that such acquired

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53. Schwendinger and Schwendinger write that in the Wardian system, "the variation of human intelligence functioned as the ethical criterion for the right of individuals to a superior standard of living. . . . The overriding inequality in Ward's utopian society was based on individual intelligence." *The Sociologists of the Chair*, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

54. Dealy, "Lester Frank Ward," *American Masters*, *op. cit.*, p. 84; Ira W. Howerth, "Universal Education and the Increase of Genius," *Educational Review* 63 (January 1922), pp. 50-56. Ward's view that genius had to be developed went against the prevailing view of his time, best expressed by Sir Francis Galton, that real genius created its own opportunities.

55. Ward, *Dynamic Sociology*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 551.

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traits would be inherited by future generations.[56] Hence there would not only be greater knowledge in the future, but people with far greater mental capacity than his own contemporaries. Social progress would thus spiral upward at an accelerating rate.

Toward "Sociocracy"

Central to Ward's thinking was the idea that social science would eventually reveal the basic truths about society, i.e., that there were certain scientifically-determined ways in which society operated. Such social truths were totally independent of the will of the people. Simultaneously, however, Ward believed that government and the democratic popular will would be one. Good reforms would not be imposed on a recalcitrant population. Rather, through formal education the people would come to desire truly beneficial social changes. Formal education in the Wardian system was the motor force from which all other positive social change would ineluctably follow. Social change would not be violent or revolutionary, but would come about gradually as the people gained more knowledge. Ward called his proposed social system a "sociocracy," which he defined as a society administered for the collective good rather than for any party or group. Sociocracy would rest "directly on the science of sociology, to investigate the facts bearing on every subject . . . for the purpose of ascertaining what is for the best interests of society at large."[57] "In a word, society would do under the same circumstances just what an intelligent individual would do. It would further in all possible ways its own interests."[58] In essence, sociocracy represented society ruling itself.

Ward did not outline a detailed blueprint for his sociocracy because it was a dynamic rather than a static construct. Various forms of private ownership would remain for some time. Ward even argued that state control of "natural" monopolies — railroads, power, communications — and various forms of economic regulation would promote healthy

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56. Ward's Lamarckianism seems to conflict with his belief that the upper class was not inherently mentally superior to the lower class. For if people did inherit acquired traits, children of educated parents would be innately more intelligent than the offspring of the uneducated. Lamarckian views were prevalent among social scientists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. See George W. Stockton, Jr., *Race, Culture and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (New York: The Free Press, 1968), pp. 234-70.

57. Ward, *Psychic Factors*, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 327.

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competition in the private sector.[59] Fundamental to his sociocracy, however, was the management of society by experts in social science — the best products of Ward's proposed educational system. Understanding the laws of society, these experts would administer society for the public good.[60]

The role of the general populace in Ward's sociocracy was to sanction the decisions of government experts. Legislative action would be far different from the clash of political interests and party politics in Ward's own era, of which he took a dim view. To Ward, "the prevailing democracies of the world are incompetent to deal with problems of social welfare."[61] In the future, legislative bodies would "doubtless need to be maintained, and every new law should be finally adopted by a vote of such bodies, but more and more this will become a merely formal way of putting the final sanction of society on decisions that have been carefully worked out in what may be called the sociological laboratory. Legislation will consist in a series of exhaustive experiments on the part of true scientific sociologists and sociological inventors working on the problems of social physics from the practical point of view. It will undertake to solve not only questions of general interest to the State, . . . but questions of social improvement, the amelioration of the condition of all the people, the removal of whatever privations may still remain, and the adoption of means to the positive increase of the social welfare, in short the organization of human happiness."[62]

As a result of the proper education about scientific truths, the people would willingly approve the government experts' decisions. Ultimately, the acceptance of the decisions of the scientific elite would become so internalized as to make formal laws unnecessary. In the distant future, the state itself, i.e., the state as an instrument of coercion, would wither away. Ward envisioned the "final disappearance of all restrictive laws and of government as a controlling agency."[63] Popular adherence to the rulings of the scientific managerial elite would be absolutely voluntary. Ward's view of an ultimate non-statist organized society is analogous to

59. Schwendinger and Schwendinger, *The Sociologists of the Chair*, *op. cit.*, p. 179; Ward's sociocracy bears resemblance to socialist theory but lacks what he regarded as socialism's *a priori* deductions and artificial egalitarianism.
60. Schwendinger and Schwendinger, *ibid.*, pp. 183-84.
61. Ward, *Psychic Factors*, *op. cit.*, p. 327.
62. Ward, *Applied Sociology*, *op. cit.*, p. 339.
63. Ward, *Pure Sociology*, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

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Marx's communism.[64] Ward's sociology provided a scientific justification for state intervention at a time when the prevailing Social Darwinism was a major bulwark of *laissez-faire*. According to Harry Elmer Barnes, Ward presented "the most forceful statement of the case for planned social change ever written."[65] By the turn of the century, social scientists and intellectuals had turned against *laissez-faire* and accepted government planning as the key to social betterment. Thus it is proper to view Ward as one of the intellectual prophets of the American welfare state directed by a managerial elite.[66]

The contemporary American managerial state resembles the Wardian sociocracy in a number of respects. Thus the American polity has seen a significant shift of power from elected officials to a permanent bureaucracy, analogous to the Wardian scientific elite. Like Ward's sociocracy, the American managerial state is not egalitarian but hierarchical, with status determined largely by educational credentials. Furthermore, the move toward collectivism in America has been gradual, as Ward advocated. The motor force for this transformation has largely been progressive ideas

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64. Like Karl Marx, Ward viewed the state as a vehicle of coercion and expected mankind to ultimately evolve into a stateless condition when it had become totally socialized. But in the present age, government, with its coercive aspects, reflected the interests of society. This view is emphasized by James Ernest Fleming, "Political and Economic Radicalism in the Theories of Lester Frank Ward" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1946). See also Fleming, "The Role of Government in a Free Society: The Conception of Lester Frank Ward," in *Social Forces*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (March 1946), pp. 257-66. In this latter work, Fleming writes: "Ward's conception of the sociocratic society may be included within the same interpretative framework as the 'stateless communism' of Marxism, which as Nicolai Lenin admitted, is identical with the classical ideals of anarchistic theory." Ward did not expect the stateless condition of mankind to be coming about in the near future. But humanity had only begun to make use of science and Ward envisioned an immense future for the human race. In his 1907 essay, "Mars and its Lesson," he predicted that the scientific age on earth would last 24 million years. Accepting the theory of intelligent life on Mars put forth by the astronomer Percival Lowell, Ward thought that scientifically-advanced Martians were at the end of that period, as their planet lost its water and oxygen and became inhospitable to life. But what impressed Ward was not that the Martian race was dying but that it had persisted so long on a planet that was considered much older than earth. See Ward, *Glimpses of the Cosmos*, Vol. 6, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-58.

65. Harry Elmer Barnes, "Should Social Change Be Consciously Directed? An Historical Survey," in *Frontiers of Democracy*, 6 (January 1940), p. 109.

66. The term "managerial" refers to a society which is dominated by government-affiliated administrators in contrast to the private capitalists in traditional capitalism and the workers in the socialist ideal. The term was developed by James Burnham in *The Managerial Revolution: What is Happening in the World* (New York: John Day Company, Inc., 1941).

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spread by educational institutions and the media, who have tended to be more progressive than the general public.[67]

In regard to education, Ward began writing after state control of public education had begun but was still precarious. The public school ideology had not yet attained cultural hegemony. With extensive growth in the Catholic population in the post-Civil War decades, Catholics undertook a major drive for public support for their own school system. Ward provided a firm rationale for state control of education purported to be based on the authority of science. The appeal to science was a powerful argument in late 19th century America. Ward's argument for statist education was echoed by numerous educators of the time and soon became firmly established. As one recent commentator writes of Ward's impact on the schools: "For Protestant Americans, at least, no longer would the wish of the family be the determining factor in education. The family's concept was too selfish, too short-sighted and lacked historical perspective. Only the state stood far enough above the hustle and bustle of everyday life to enable it to specify the education of the young without favor and without bias. An idea that occupied only a few pages in Ward's book had become state policy in public education."[68]

Conclusions

Wardian ideas continued to influence American education in the 20th century, most critically the belief that education can serve as the lever for social progress. In large measure, this influence was spread by Dewey's educational views, which closely resembled Ward's. As Herbert Kliebard writes: "In many respects, Ward foreshadowed in his 1883

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67. According to McClay, "There is considerable justification for this view of him as a precursor to the energetic governmental conceptions of Progressives and New Dealers. Certainly, his notion of a sociocracy, in which the practice of government itself would rest 'directly upon the science of sociology,' which in turn permits the employment of disciplined minds as a powerful force for reshaping the social and natural worlds, points to the use of trained experts in economics, political science, and social policy to plan and administer vigorous and active central governments."See McClay, *op. cit.*, p. 121. Paul Gottfried describes the managerial class control of modern industrial democracies in "Public Administration and Liberal Democracy," in *Telos* 104 (Summer, 1995), pp. 27-50.

68. "For all practical purposes the fifteen years following the publication of *Dynamic Sociology* saw the issue of the parochial school settled in Massachusetts. The Catholic drive for public funds was thwarted. In no small way that was due to Lester F. Ward." See James M. Benjamin, "Lester F. Ward and Public Education," in *Journal of Thought* 11 (1976), p. 256.

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work significant elements of John Dewey's educational philosophy."[69] Like Ward, Dewey emphasized the role of science in achieving gradual collectivistic reform and the key role of education in the reform process. Commager goes so far as to maintain that Ward "anticipated John Dewey and supplied him with a scientific basis for much of his educational philosophy."[70] Dewey was aware of Ward, and favorably reviewed Ward's *The Psychic Factors of Civilization* in an 1894 issue of *Psychological Review*. While Dewey did not explicitly acknowledge his reliance on the work of Ward, Wardian ideas did circulate in Dewey's intellectual milieu.[71]

Ward's ideas still enjoy favor in American educational circles. A 1987 article in the *Teachers College Record* holds that Ward's concept of telesis "has been confirmed by developments in many fields, including biological science, economic science, sociology, and education." The article further maintains that "Ward's ideas are essential to our understanding of the development of American educational theory. Moreover, the concept of telic progress and the biological rationale for educational opportunity continue to be useful to this day. Ward's musty books should be opened and the great ideas read just as Ward wrote them."[72]

Despite similarities between the future American managerial state and Ward's sociocracy, it is, nonetheless, unlikely that his own writings contributed significantly to the collectivist changes in America. His books never gained any great popularity and he had few important disciples. John Burnham's assessment of Ward may be correct: "Ward was in a sense a prophet of a modern positive philosophy of government, but he played an insignificant role in the thinking of his own day and after."[73]

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69. Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893-1958* (New York: Routledge, 1987), p. 25.

70. Henry Steele Commager, *The Search for a Usable Past* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), p. 258.

71. The similarity between Ward and John Dewey is stressed by James Claudius Peel, "A Comparative Study of the Educational Theories of Lester F. Ward and John Dewey" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1943).

72. Laurel N. Tanner and Daniel Tanner, "Environmentalism in American Pedagogy: The Legacy of Lester Frank Ward," in *Teachers College Record* 88 (Summer 1987), pp. 540, 542. In their book, *History of the School Curriculum*, the Tanners write: "It was Ward's book [*Dynamic Sociology*] that dealt the death blow to *laissez-faire* as a social system, provided the theoretical underpinnings for American Progressivism, and effected a revolution in the secondary curriculum" (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1990), p. 111.

73. John C. Burnham, *Lester Frank Ward in American Thought* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1956), p. 22.

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That Ward was a prophet of the future without directly influencing it was realized by Ward himself. With his characteristic immodesty, he considered all putatively new ideas in social science as not only having been put forth earlier by himself but as representing "an integral part of my system of philosophy." Ward did not go so far as to claim that others were plagiarizing him, though he did speculate on the possibility that these ideas might "emanate primarily from me, as my ideas are slowly making their way in the world and getting 'in the air'." He admitted, however, that the most likely explanation for any similarity was "due to the *Zeitgeist* itself, which is at last tardily overtaking me."[74]

Although Ward was prophetic, the benefits of his projected society have not been obvious. Whereas he recognized that elites throughout history had used their power to advance their own interests, he cavalierly assumed that his scientific elite would act in a purely altruistic manner. Yet the monolithic state he envisioned would empower its elite with far greater control over society than the plutocrats of his era. Why this virtually unlimited power would not be exploitated was left unexplained.[75] Even more questionable is Ward's facile assumption that science can determine the public good. Science provides no information as to what people ought to desire, nor what they will desire in the future. Economic, social, and political goods simply do not have any intrinsic value to be discovered by science. This helps explain the utter failure of state planning in the former Communist bloc (societies built according to "scientific" socialism) to satisfy human desires.[76]

Since science cannot determine objective social good, Ward's scientific elite would simply be imposing its subjective will on society. The education of the populace to accept the alleged scientific truths of that elite would be indoctrination and social control. The Wardian system emits more than a whiff of totalitarianism, though in Ward's defense, it must be pointed out that in his time statist control under the aegis of science had

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74. Ward, *Glimpses of the Cosmos*, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, pp. lxxxii-lxxxiii.

75. That the managerial class, like all dominant classes in history, uses its power to advance its own interests is a key theme of James Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution*. A concise presentation of Burnham's managerial class thesis is presented by Samuel T. Francis, *Power and History: The Political Thought of James Burnham* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1984), pp. 7-47.

76. Ludwig von Mises, *Human Action: A Treatise on Economics*, New Revised Edition (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1963), pp. 698-715; Chiaki Nishiyama and Kurt R. Leube, eds., *The Essence of Hayek* (Stanford, Ca.: Hoover Institution Press, 1984), pp. 259-64.

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not yet become a widely demonstrated project. In part, the flaws in Ward's system stem from the dichotomy he made between his projected sociocracy and existing capitalist society. To Ward, the essence of sociocracy was the use of conscious planning; capitalist society he viewed as entirely unplanned. It would seem self evident that human betterment is more likely to be achieved by conscious planning than by pure chance. While Ward identified planning with state planning, planning also takes place in capitalist systems. The contrast, therefore, was not between the planned sociocracy and unplanned market capitalism but between different types of planning: sociocracy's monolithic planning as opposed to market capitalism's pluralistic planning, with the market reflecting the composite of those many calculations.

As Ward himself acknowledged, his sociological views largely derived from his own personal experiences. Coming from a background of poverty, he had been unable to attain a formal education. He assumed that if he had received an opportunity for a formal education, he would have been a greater success at an earlier age.[77] But Ward was the quintessential self-made man. He failed to realize that it might have been his freedom from the formal schooling that enabled him to develop his own penchant for knowledge. It seems unlikely that the Wardian sociocracy, with its stringent controls, would produce polymaths of the caliber of Lester Frank Ward. Not unlike Shigalov, in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *The Possessed*, who started his scheme for social reorganization with the idea of unrestricted freedom and wound up with a blueprint for unrestricted despotism,[78] Ward sought to create a society that would provide greater educational opportunity to the masses and ultimately fashioned a state that would maintain an intellectual straitjacket over the minds of its citizenry.

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77. Edward F. Shaughnessy, Jr., "Lester Frank Ward: The Development of an Educational Theory" (Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 1971), pp. 139-72.

78. The revolutionary ideologue Shigalov stated: "I have become entangled in my own data and my conclusions directly contradict my original premises. I started out with the idea of unrestricted freedom and I have arrived at unrestricted despotism." See Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Possessed*, tr. by Andrew R. MacAndrew (New York: Signet Classic, 1962). p. 384.

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Strange Standpoints: Or, How to Define the Situation for Situated Knowledge

Dick Pels

"Standpoint epistemologies" have provided some of the most powerful challenges to the conventional view that true knowledge is value-free, disinterested, and universal. Severing the traditional epistemological link between objectivity and neutrality, and measuring truth claims in terms of social location, standpoint theories assert that (scientific) knowledge is inescapably position-bound, hence both partial and partisan in character. Accordingly, they plead a conscious politicization of knowledge, and a novel assessment of the balance of what positionally determined knowledges might entail. The search for truth "for its own sake," as a universally valid and context-transcending "view from nowhere" (what Haraway calls the "god trick"), is abandoned in favor of a new *social*-epistemological question: "which social standpoint . . . offers the best chance for reaching an optimum of truth?"[1] Given that all beliefs, including the best scientific propositions, are socially situated, what is required is "a critical evaluation to determine which social situations tend to generate the most objective knowledge claims."[2]

Standpoint epistemologies come in many forms. Machiavelli provides one of the first powerful formulation in the famous dedication to *The Prince*. Excusing himself for his presumption, as a man of humble condition, in venturing to discuss and lay down rules about princely government, he goes on to say: "For those who draw maps place themselves on

1. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), p. 71.

2. Sandra Harding, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991), p. 142. For further discussion of feminist standpoint theory see the recent *Signs* symposium, especially Susan Heckman, "Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited" and the various responses, in *Signs*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 341-402.

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low ground, in order to understand the character of the mountains and other high points, and climb higher in order to understand the character of the plains. Likewise, one needs to be a ruler to understand properly the character of the people, and to be a man of the people to understand properly the character of rulers."[3] But, of course, it is the Hegelian dialectic of master and slave, and classical Marxism's adoption of the "class standpoint of the proletariat," which have provided the matrix for all subsequent versions.[4] An additional (and so far neglected) source is found in radical nationalist or *völkische* affirmations of the "standpoint of the nation" or "the people" as expressing a culturally or racially homogeneous "essence."[5] Standpoint theories of knowledge emerge simultaneously from the radical Left and the radical Right, to challenge the liberal idea(l) of autonomous and value-neutral science. Socialism and nationalism, the great 19th century ideological contenders, mirror one another in advancing their alternative "identity politics"[6] of the working class and of the nation

3. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. by Quentin Skinner & Russel Price (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988 [1513/32]), p. 4.

4. Dick Pels, "De Proletarier als Vreemdeling," in *Kennis & Methode*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (April 1984), pp. 137-158.

5. An early example is provided by the outcry of nationalist and racist "anti-intellectuals" such as Barrès and Maurras against *les intellectuels* during the Dreyfus Affair in turn-of-the-century France. It is even more articulate in some conservative intellectuals in Weimar Germany, as can be seen by the following excerpt from Carl Schmitt: "We know not only intuitively, but on the basis of the most rigorous scientific insight, that all law is the creation of a determinate people. It is an epistemological truth that only those are capable of seeing facts as they are, hear utterances accurately, understand words correctly, and rightly evaluate impressions of people and things, who participate in an existential (*seinsmässigen*), species-determined (*artbestimmten*) way in the law-creating community, and belong to it with their very being. The human being experiences the reality of this belonging to his people and race not only in the deepest, least conscious impulses of his emotional life; it equally reaches into the smallest fibres of his brain. Objective is not he who wants to be so and believes in subjectively good conscience that he has sufficiently exercised himself to become objective. An alien to the species (*Artfremder*), no matter how critically and shrewdly he may act, no matter how many books he reads or writes, thinks and understands differently, because he belongs to a different species, and remains existentially determined by it in all decisive trains of thought. That is what constitutes the objective reality of 'objectivity'." See Carl Schmitt, *Staat, Bewegung, Volk* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1935), p. 45.

6. Often "identity politics" is deployed in *opposition* to traditional, "other-directed" standpoint theories of class and nation. Thus, the Black feminist Combahee River Statement is explicit: the "most profound and most radical politics comes out of our *own* identity, as opposed to working to end somebody else's oppression." In response, Harding recalls that Hegel was not a slave, and that Marx, Engels and Lukács were not proletarians. Cf. Sandra Harding, "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is 'Strong Objectivity'?," in Linda Alcoff & Elizabeth Potter, eds., *Feminist Epistemologies* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 62. Cf. also Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity* (London: Routledge, 1996).

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(and it would pay to inspect their similarities and differences far more closely than is feasible here).[7]

In past decades, the left-wing Marxian inspiration, as generalized in Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, has been rekindled especially by feminist theorists, although similar arguments have recently been deployed by lesbian and gay theory, by post-colonial cultural criticism, and by the interesting hybrid constituted by black feminist thought. If we add some representative arguments favored by religious fundamentalists and neo-nationalist radicals from the New Right, one might even say that standpoint arguments, for good or ill, presently offer the most persistently popular rationale for a politics of knowledge as framed by particularist identities and the reclamation of cultural differences. While Mannheim extrapolated (but also defused) proletarian standpoint theory by privileging the mediating position of the "free-floating" intelligentsia, recent conceptualizations preserve the more radical particularist impulses of both left- and right-wing identity politics, while shopping for new historical agents of emancipation such as women, lesbians, people of color, or people of third world descent.

The common point of departure inherited from classical standpoint thinking is the conviction, already clearly supported by Machiavelli, that in a hierarchically structured and conflict-ridden society "you cannot see everything from everywhere." In such a society, there are objectively opposed locations generating disparate social experiences, which in turn define divergent, partial viewpoints with variable chances of faithfully representing social reality. As Hall declares, "we all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific. What we say is always 'in context,' *positioned* . . . Representation is possible only

7. Cf. the antagonistic collusion between Afrikaner nationalism and radical Afrocentric thought. See Dan O'Meara, *Volkskapitalisme. Class, Capital, and Ideology in the Development of Afrikaner Nationalism 1934-1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); see Molefi Kete Asante, *Afrocentricity* (Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 1988). Both Gilroy and Hall have commented on the uncanny similarities between white racism and its black inversion. See Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic. Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 34; Stuart Hall, *Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, David Morley & Kuan-Hsing Chen, eds. (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 445, 472). See also Alastair Bonnett, " 'White Studies,' The Problems and Projects of a New Research Agenda," in *Theory, Culture, and Society* (May 1996), Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 145-155. Rattansi emphasizes that the language of difference and ethnicity has no necessary political belonging, and points to apparently incongruous alliances such as those between cultural racists of the British New Right and British Muslim communities, or black nationalists such as Farrakhan and the white American extreme right. See Ali Rattansi, "Just Framing: Ethnicities and Racisms in a 'Postmodern' Framework," in Linda Nicholson & Steven Seidman, eds., *Social Postmodernism. Beyond Identity Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 250-286.

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because enunciation is always produced within codes which have a history, a position within the discursive formations of a particular space and time. The displacement of the 'centered' discourses of the West entails putting in question its universalist character and its transcendental claims to speak for everyone, while being itself everywhere and nowhere."[8]

Following this axiom about inevitable situatedness and perspectivity, standpoint theories characteristically introduce a second principle, equally adumbrated by Machiavelli, the self-styled "man of the people": that the dominated or marginal not only "see differently" but also "see better and more."[9] Althusser has appropriately updated Machiavelli for advanced capitalist class society: in a class-divided society "one must be proletariat in order to know capital."[10] Harding outlines a more general vision, which is also inclusive of hierarchies structured by gender inequality and/or racial apartheid: "In societies where power is organized hierarchically — for example by class or race or gender — there is no possibility of an Archimedean perspective, one that is disinterested, impartial, value-free, or detached from the particular, historical social relations in which everyone participates. Instead, each person can achieve only a partial view of reality from the perspective of his or her own position in the social hierarchy. And such a view is not only partial but also distorted by the way the relations of domination are organized. Further, the view from the perspective of the powerful is far more partial and distorted than that available from the perspective of the dominated; this is so for a variety of reasons. To name just one, the powerful have far more interests in obscuring the unjust conditions that produce their unearned privileges and authority than do the dominated groups in hiding the conditions that produce their situation."[11]

In order to gain a critically objective view of society as a whole, the best method is therefore "to start thought from marginal lives."[12]

8. Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in Jonathan Rutherford, ed., *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), pp. 222; and Stuart Hall, *Critical Dialogues*, *op. cit.*, p. 446.

9. Some of the arbitrariness of this claim is suggested by Nietzsche's view that there is better vision from the top (the dominant *Herrenmoral*), and an urge to falsify from the standpoint of deferent and reactive "slave morality." Nietzsche also unearths and criticizes the false identity play of "ascetic" intellectuals posing as "the people." Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Zur Genealogie der Moral* (Frankfurt & Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 1991 [1887]).

10. Louis Althusser, *Écrits sur la Psychanalyse. Freud et Lacan* (Paris: Editions Stock/IMEC, 1993), p. 229.

11. Harding, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

12. Cf. also Sandra Harding, "After the Neutrality Ideal: Science, Politics, and 'Strong Objectivity'," in *Social Research* (Fall 1992), Vol. 59, No. 3, p. 581; and "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology," *op. cit.*, p. 50.

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According to Haraway, "there is good reason to believe vision is better from below the brilliant space platforms of the powerful . . . There is a premium on establishing the capacity to see from the peripheries and the depths."[13] Hartsock similarly believes that in systems of domination the vision available to the rulers will be "both partial and perverse," in contradistinction to the vision from below, such as represented by women in patriarchy: "women's lives make available a particular and privileged vantage point on male supremacy, a vantage point which can ground a powerful critique of the phallocratic institutions and ideology which constitute the capitalist form of patriarchy."[14] This epistemic asymmetry between the standpoints of the dominant and the subaltern, in its feminist version, implies that "starting off research from women's lives will generate less partial and distorted accounts not only of women's lives but also of men's lives and of the whole social order."[15]

An Epistemology of Marginality

In the following, I will loosely (though not exclusively) focus upon the feminist critique, and elucidate the promises and limits of standpoint theory's basic epistemological claims primarily in terms of gender inequality rather than in terms of class or race. In doing so, I trust that the formal structure of the argument does not dramatically vary between the three versions, even though both feminist and anti-racist cultural studies have critically modified and fine-tuned important elements of the original class-based Marxian framework. In the variegated spectrum of social markings, class, gender, and race are regularly identified as a "holy trinity," clustering the most divisive or inequality-generating social identifications.[16] Earlier versions of standpoint theory, such as proletarian Marxism, radical nationalism, or political racism, have typically been seduced by an essentialist epistemological politics according to which the preferred criterion of social belonging (economic property, cultural particularity, racial identity)

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13. Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (London: Free Association Books, 1991), pp. 190-91.

14. Nancy Hartsock, "The Feminist Standpoint," in Sandra Harding & Merrill B. Hintikka, eds., *Discovering Reality* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1983), p. 284.

15. Harding, "Rethinking," *op. cit.*, p. 56; *Whose Science? op. cit.*, p. 48; " 'Strong Objectivity': A Response to the New Objectivity Question," in *Synthese* (September 1995), Vol. 104, No. 3, p. 344.

16. Cf. "Editors' Introduction: Multiplying Identities," in Kwame Anthony Appiah & Henry Louis Gates Jr., eds., *Identities* (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 1.

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not only indicated a homogeneously closed ontological condition, but also defined a distinct hierarchy of primary and secondary causal determinations (in terms of "last instance" causality). Economic, political, religious, or cultural fundamentalisms (or those of nation and race) typically single out one "innate" master identity as exclusive and ultimately decisive, which defines, incorporates, and even constitutes all others. Feminist critical theory, both in its early and more contemporary variants, still shows manifest traces of such a "gender essentialism;"[17] while postcolonial criticism is similarly embarrassed by potent residues of an "essentialism of color."[18] But increasingly, modern critical theorists have retraced the historical path of Bernsteinian revisionism in relativizing the "last instance" impact of either class, gender or race, acknowledging that none of the three markings are empirically observable in a pure or solitary state.[19] This is enough to shuttle all ontological priority claims, even if they are channeled through sophisticated multi-directional models of "last instance" determination.

Recent feminist theory, in its historic encounter with postmodernist philosophy and the cross-cutting issue of race (e.g. black feminism), has taken the lead in recognizing both the precariously constructed, performed and performative nature of all social identities, but also the sheer difficulty of abstracting the various social signifiers (or markers of oppression) from the complex web of their multiple interactions. The idea of an "interlocking system of oppression" and of domination as a "multiple system,"

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17. Cf. Judith Grant's criticism of the reification of categories such as "woman" and "experience" in *Fundamental Feminism* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993).

18. See the black essentialism and "nativism" of, e.g., Leopold Senghor ("Negritude: A Humanism of the Twentieth Century," in Patrick Williams & Laura Chrisman, eds., *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory* [New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993], pp. 27-35) and Asante (*op. cit.*, 1989). Neither feminist nor postcolonial theorizing have entirely freed themselves from essentialist identity readings, viz. the residual attraction of a "strategic essentialism" in the work of, e.g., Spivak, Hall, Gilroy, Rattansi, Fuss, or Braidotti.

19. Cf. Althusser's familiar argument that "the economic dialectic is never active in the pure state: the superstructures are never seen to step respectfully aside before His Majesty the Economy as he strides along the royal road of the Dialectic. From the first moment to the last, the lonely hour of the 'last instance' never comes" (*For Marx* [New York: Vintage Books, 1970], p. 113). This is echoed by feminists such as Susan Bordo ("Gender never exhibits itself in pure form. . .") ("Feminism, Postmodernism, and Gender Skepticism," in Linda Nicholson, ed., *Feminism/Postmodernism* [New York & London: Routledge, 1990], p. 150), and "Introduction: When Feminisms Intersect Epistemology," in Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter, eds., *Feminist Epistemologies*, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4). The latter likewise distance themselves from the conventional feminist commitment to gender as the primary axis of oppression, arguing that it can never be observed as a pure influence, but always appears in complex interrelation with other systems of identification and hierarchy.

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which has (not accidentally) emerged from *black* feminist thought,[20] reflects a parallel movement in postcolonial criticism, which is likewise engaged in distancing itself from a reductionist and missionary identity politics, in order to approach visions of hybridization, cultural syncretism, and multiple identity.[21] Perhaps paradigmatic is Stuart Hall's identification of the shift from an essentialist notion of "the Black experience" as a singular and unifying framework towards what he calls a "positive" concept of "the ethnicity of the margins, of the periphery." Hall charts a transformation from a "mimetic" or "expressive" towards a "constitutive" or "formative" notion of the representation of black culture, which puts an end to "innocent" notions about the essential black subject, and registers blackness as principally a constructed category which lacks transcendental or transcultural fixity.[22] This also implies that issues of race always appear historically in articulation with other categories and divisions and are constantly crossed by categories of class and gender. We are all ethnically located; but this insight calls precisely for a politics of ethnicity that is predicated on difference and diversity.[23]

In analyzing and evaluating recent standpoint analytics, I focus on its recapitulation of a theme which is directly inherited from its classical leftwing and rightwing predecessors: that of *marginality*, *outsidership*, or *strangerhood*. Indeed, the trope of marginality, and of the redemptive and promissory character of the condition of alienation, has been equally intrinsic to the Marxian analysis of alienated labor and the missionary role of the class "with radical chains," as it has informed right-radical

20. Cf. Patricia Hill Collins, "Learning From the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought," *Social Problems* (December 1986) Vol. 33, No. 6, pp. S14-S32; and Collins, *Black Feminist Thought* (New York & London: Routledge, 1991).

21. Appiah & Gates Jr., *op. cit.*; Hall, "Cultural Identity," *op. cit.*; Hall, *Critical Dialogues*, *op. cit.*; Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*, *op. cit.*

22. Hall, *Critical Dialogues*, *op. cit.*, pp. 442-43. Cf. the parallel expressions in Butler, whose performative theory of gender likewise focuses upon the politics of representation, arguing that gender attributions are not "expressive" but "performative," and that political signifiers such as "woman" operate as performative rather than representational terms (Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* [New York & London: Routledge, 1990], p. 141; and Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter. On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* [New York & London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 208-210). Or see Seidman on homosexuality and queer theory, who registers that among the consequences of the "constructionist" questioning of essentialist (sexual) identities has been "the loss of innocence within the gay community" (Steven Seidman, "Deconstructing Queer Theory, or the Under-theorization of the Social and the Ethical," in Nicholson & Seidman, eds., *op. cit.*, pp. 116-117). Cf. also Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience," in Nicholson & Seidman, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-86, and other contributions to this volume.

23. Hall, *op. cit.*, pp. 447, 465ff.

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spokespersonship for the oppressed and humiliated people or race — *viz.* the missionary alienation which, after 1917, was attributed to the German *Volk* in its "darkest hour" of military defeat and economic depression. This recurrent topos of alienation, and of the redemptive privilege of outsidership and marginality, remains a persistently magnetic theme across the entire history of standpoint theory, and only gains in visibility and pertinence in its present-day elaborations. This is especially evident in the ubiquitous feminist references to woman's position and life experiences as those of a generic "stranger," "outsider within," or "resident alien," which supposedly generate a "bifurcated consciousness" or "double vision" which offer a privileged view of male-dominated society.[24] Hall's earlier-cited concept of an "ethnicity of the margins" indicates that postcolonial theory is similarly attracted to metaphors of "dislocation" and "in-betweenness," and to the epistemological virtues of "double consciousness" in a "third" or "hybrid" location.[25]

Departing from their primary anchorages in class, gender, or race, and shedding all residues of "last instance" thinking, recent standpoint theories thus tend to converge on a generalized discourse of marginality — which to some extent is defined *against* the standpoints which they originally started out with. This is already a marked feature of neo-Marxist standpoint theorizing, which has in various (revisionist) ways said "farewell to the proletariat," and, in the process, has gradually eclipsed the materialist criterion of non-propertied, *alienated labor* in favor of a more flexible accentuation of *alienation as such* — as is variously illustrated by Fanon's idea of the "wretched of the earth," Sweezy's notion of the "substitute proletariat," Marcuse's high expectations about "fringe groups," and Gorz' view of the post-industrial "non-class of non-workers." However, this "decentering" movement is equally discernible in modern feminist and postcolonial concepts. Harding's writings, for example, increasingly shift between the idea to "start thinking from *women's* lives" and the more general admonition

24. Cf. Dorothy Smith, *The Everyday World as Problematic* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1988); Harding, *Whose Science? op. cit.*; Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, *op. cit.*; Bat-Ami Bar On, "Marginality and Epistemic Privilege," in Alcoff & Potter, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-100; Janet Wolff, *Resident Alien. Feminist Cultural Criticism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

25. Cf. Hall, "Cultural Identity"; Hall, "The Question of Cultural Identity," in Stuart Hall, David Held & Tony McGrew, eds., *Modernity and Its Futures* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), pp. 273-316; Edward Said, "Reflections on Exile," in Russell Ferguson *et al.*, eds., *Out There. Marginalization and Contemporary Culture* (Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 1990), pp. 357-366; Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York & London: Routledge, 1993); Gilroy, *Black Atlantic*, *op. cit.*

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"to start thinking from *marginal* lives."[26] The marginality of the "outsider within" has become a powerful topic in the black feminism of, e.g., Lorde, Hooks, and Hill Collins.[27] Haraway's ironic myth of the "cyborg," a hybrid creature that transgresses all conventional boundaries and fractures all traditional identities, surely offers the most radical expression of this feminist trend.[28] Black cultural studies exemplify a similarly generalized metaphorics of displacement and alienation. Gilroy, for example, stylizes the black experience in terms of a Black Atlantic "diaspora," in which black particularity is situated and constituted simultaneously inside and outside Western culture. The concept of diaspora (modeled after Jewish experiences), and its satellite metaphors of hybridity, homelessness, and exile, are offered against the continuing obsession with absolutist concepts of a timeless and totalized ethnic subjectivity, which disregard internal divisions in terms of class, gender, sexuality, age, or political consciousness. Against such roots- and rootedness-oriented concepts, Gilroy associates the black experience of modernity with "the standpoint of dislocation," and prefers to view identity as a process of movement and mediation, as a "changing same."[29]

It is this convergent theme of the "outsider within" who enjoys "double vision" which establishes a powerful epistemological point and might even be taken as the enduringly relevant "summary" of standpoint theory in its various historical manifestations. What standpoint theories ultimately seem to offer is a more general or abstract *social epistemology of the stranger*, rather than a more concrete and particularized epistemology of class, gender, or race; an epistemology of diversity or multiplicity rather than of singular identity; of the double consciousness of "crossover" identities, rather than the single and stable consciousness of "taking responsibility for one's roots." In this sense, the theme of the stranger resonates with classical sociological concepts about the advantages of a "third" position, as found in Simmel's remarks on the objectivity of the stranger's vs. the native's gaze, or in Mannheim's argument about the visionary capacities of a "free-floating" intelligentsia, which finds itself sociologically remote from *both* the dominant *and* the dominated classes

26. Harding, *Whose Science? op. cit.*, pp. 125, 150; "After the Neutrality Ideal," p. 581; "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology," *op. cit.*; "Strong Objectivity," p. 342.

27. Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider* (Freedom CA: The Crossing Press, 1984); bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Boston: South End Press, 1984); Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*.

28. Haraway, *op. cit.*

29. Gilroy, *op. cit.*

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in contemporary capitalism. Innovatory, rule-breaking knowledge is perceived as a function of marginality, of the location of the "outsider within," in all domains of social and professional life; an insight which can profitably be generalized beyond the more particular identifications espoused by Marxism, feminism, and anti-racism.

An intriguing point about this generalized epistemology of stranger-hood, as already intimated, is that this "secondary" identity must be partly secured *against* the primary affiliations of class, gender, or race with which it is initially defined as continuous; in all three cases, it tends to break up their supposed homogeneity and closure and to kill residual claims about ontological primacy. The "class trouble" which infected classical Marxism has presently spread to feminist "gender trouble" and postcolonial "ethnicity trouble"; while its historic "farewell to the working class" is now vigorously copied in analogous farewells to "Womanhood" and "Negritude." This threefold suspension or even dissolution of previously substantial figurations of identity has also triggered a systematic dilution of the determinative significance (the imputed sociological weight) of such primary "situations" for any credible concept of "situated knowledges." Indeed, the epistemological salience of the primary determinations of class, gender, and race is only "rescued" by way of recasting the various bearers of social identity (proletarians, women, blacks) as generically estranged from the dominant social and political order. But in principle, the stranger's condition focuses a more abstract and remote social situation — not so much a location but a *dis*location — since (s)he suffers and benefits from the cross-fertilization of views that arise in (and in-between) disparate experiential contexts. The stranger, by being partially estranged from his primary identity, occupies a "standpoint against standpoints" (or an identity "in-between" identities) which is not captured by any preferential "crossing" of elements from the classical trinity of identity/difference.

A social epistemology of the stranger, by focusing this second-order standpoint and its epistemological effects, hence also (strangely?) returns us to an element of the traditional "transcendental" view of knowledge which standpoint theories have historically risen against. Indeed, while holding on to the principle that knowledge is positionally determined and contextually relative, it simultaneously helps to recover a fruitful core suggestion of the rationalist ideal: that knowledge, in order to be interesting or creatively new, is/must be relatively context-*free*, must be able to rise

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above and transgress its primary situatedness.[30] The pregnant suggestion of an epistemology of strangerhood is to delineate a specific social situation which mediates between the "view from nowhere" of the celebrated unitary and universal subject, and the politicized and particularized "view from somewhere" which is canvassed by traditional standpoint epistemologies of the "primary" kind. It is the stranger who somehow embodies and preserves the ancient philosophical promise of transcendence and distanciation; but (s)he simultaneously remains intensely place-bound, committed, interested, and partisan. The stranger moves across contexts and encompasses them in double vision; but this location is never a universal one which commands a "totalizing" view. (S)he does not float above interests, but embodies a different interest. There is no universal mediation, no shifting in and out of all conceivable situations, in order to become once again the "nowhere (wo)man;" but a spatially and temporally bounded migration or switch between *two or three* contexts or lifeworlds, in a "third space" which stretches somewhere in-between the local and the global.[31]

The Metonymic Fallacy of the Intellectuals

At this point, I introduce a second theme, which intriguingly spins around and resonates with the theme of marginality and suggests a more critical balance of what standpoint epistemologies have to offer. Like the first theme, it highlights a secondary location of the situated knowledge subject, which to some extent remains ensconced behind primary proletarian, female, or black identifications. Also like the first, it focuses an identity which is embarrassingly *common* to various standpoint theories, although it normally remains silenced and suppressed. This secondary

30. In choosing the path of the stranger, we may also escape from the constraints of an overly *collectivist* sociology of knowledge (cf. Mannheim, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4, 25-29; Harding, *Whose Science?*, p. 59), which insufficiently acknowledges that innovative knowledge is often created in *estrangement* from or *opposition* to group beliefs and group values. Once again, this is a strong point of traditional "individualist" epistemology; it also calls for a more serious consideration of the *psychology* of knowledge (in the venerable tradition of Stirner, Nietzsche, and Freud) to complement and complete one-sided sociological approaches. This is effected not so much by "reinstating" the cognitive over against the social, but by theorizing the standpoints of marginal individuals.

31. At first sight, this may seem close to Bauman's view that universality arises out of estrangement and that "the standpoint of the exile is the only cognitive determinant of universally binding truth" (Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* [Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991], p. 84). In my concept, however, the stranger cannot be universalized in this manner, since he precisely escapes the traditional opposition between the "immaculate concept" of the transcendental subject and the immediate transposition of particularity into universality which is undertaken by traditional standpoint theories.

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social persona is that of the *spokesperson* or the ("organic") *intellectual*. All major variants of standpoint epistemology confront a "spokesperson problem," which arises from the fact that standpoints do not simply exist in the real world in order to be "recognized for what they are" or "taken responsibility for;"[32] they need to be *spoken for* in order to become constituted as standpoints in the first place. Identities cannot simply be adopted as "deep structures" or "natural kinds," but must be attributed, constructed, and performed; they need to be intellectually filtered and processed. This intellectual work of performance and construction is usually not taken into full account by those who do the constructing, who are easily seduced to "take on" a substantialized identity which is aligned with a larger emancipatory cause and enables them to hide their secondary will to empowerment behind the supposedly primary one of a particular class, gender, or race. This *pars pro toto* identity play might be described as the "metonymic fallacy of the intellectuals."

Feminist standpoint theory, in consciously borrowing the architecture of Marxist epistemology, also tends to recapitulate some of its basic cognitive flaws. Proletarian theory was in a sense a standpoint theory of its intellectual spokesmen, who consistently hid behind the broad back of the proletariat in order to legitimate their own precarious identity and sense of revolutionary historical mission.[33] More concretely, it was an expression of the standpoint of *marginal* intellectuals, revolutionary critics out of place with and resentful of the established bourgeois order, who tended to appropriate and construct a primary ontological identity by adding some salient characteristics which in fact more readily reflected their own secondary one. As a result, the "really existing" historical proletariat was embellished (or burdened) with properties of intellectuality ("a superior view") and marginality ("a class with radical chains," a "revolutionary class") which virtually guaranteed its self-transformation from a class "in itself" into a fully conscious class "for itself," which was firmly motivated to pull off its preordained historical mission. But, of course, this historical mission was projected and ordained first of all by the revolutionary intellectuals themselves; the "standpoint of the proletariat" was first of all their *own*; even while the proletariat was acclaimed as the primary agent of the

32. Cf. Adrienne Rich, "Notes towards a Politics of Location," in *Blood, Bread, and Poetry. Selected Prose 1979-1985* (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Cie, 1986), p. 219.

33. Pels, *op. cit.*; cf. Gouldner, *After Fragmentation*; Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-Modernity, and Intellectuals* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987).

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socialist revolution, it was *theory* (and *theorists*) that operated as such, by inventing, constructing, and representing its historically "necessary" standpoint. From its inception, therefore, proletarian standpoint theory was caught in a vicious circularity and a specific form of *intellectualism*.

Feminist standpoint theory, insofar as it has extrapolated the Marxian epistemological structure, appears caught in a similarly circular conflict between primary and secondary identities; it offers similar opportunities for an "identity swap" and for the resultant "absent presence" of the intellectual spokespersons. The Marxist slippage between proletarians and intellectuals is repeated in terms of a similar metonymic transcription from the broad category of "women" to the more restricted one of feminists, who are usually *intellectuals* (and more often than not, also marginal ones). As in classical Marxism, this secondary identity is tendentially repressed, even though it is feminist *critical theory* which exclusively claims to define the situational interests and strivings of "women" in the first place.[34] Like the proletariat, which Marxists picture as the collective stranger in capitalist society, women are perceived by feminists to be collectively estranged from patriarchal or male-dominated society. But once again, such characteristics appear more readily ascribable to a small political elite or intellectual vanguard than to the represented constituency as a whole. Indeed, if feminist standpoint arguments are investigated more closely, it turns out that it is not so much the contradictory or marginal location of "women" as such, but precisely that of the female feminist *thinker* which is deemed to offer epistemological advantages. It is her peculiar condition of an "outsider *within*," her distinct position of marginality *in the center*, and the "double consciousness" which is induced by it, which is taken metonymically to reflect the standpoint of the "class" of women as a whole.

As in other critical projects of emancipation (nationalism not excepted), one identity is foregrounded as primary while another one is "held back." The frontstage identity (e.g., womanhood, whiteness or blackness, class or national affiliation) is invariably mediated by and processed through the backstage identity of intellectual spokespersonship. Usually also a self-consciously *marginal* identity, it dictates and projects a number of characteristics (of intellectuality and marginality) which structure the larger categories of class, nation, gender, and race which it undertakes to speak for and represent. In this fashion, marginal intellectuals create a

34. On the intrinsic circularity of standpoint theory see more extensively Grant, *op. cit.*, pp. 102ff, 155-56, and Baukje Prins, *The Standpoint in Question: Situated Knowledges and the Dutch Minorities Discourse* (diss. ms., University of Utrecht, 1997).

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false shadow of themselves, an ontological double which enables them to align their critical claims with a broader historical force and a more compelling sociological reality than their own.

Perhaps the rules of this mistaken identity play may be further illuminated by drawing a formal distinction between three epistemological positions. The *first* and *second* positions together define the dualistic field of contest identified by the various critical theories: bourgeois vs. proletariat, male vs. female, white vs. black (in generalized form: dominant vs. dominated, or established vs. outsiders). The critical theories invariably assume that it is advisable to depart from the standpoint of the latter in order to attain a more reliable view of the structure as a whole: the "view from below" is ascribed better epistemological vision than the view from the center. However, by foregrounding the contest between the first and second positions, the critical theories tend to silence a *third* position,[35] which is the position from which they themselves speak. This third position is not only marginal *vis-à-vis* the powerful center, but also marginal (although to a lesser extent) *vis-à-vis* the situation of the powerless or dominated themselves. This is why Bourdieu identifies intellectuals as "dominated dominants," and insists that their positions are perhaps homologous but not identical with those of the dominated.[36] Critical intellectuals indeed find themselves in a contradictory social location because they identify with the oppressed but simultaneously take their distance from their unmediated experiences of oppression. Marginal standpoints by themselves do not suffice; they must be intellectualized, pass through theory; which evidently requires the guiding presence of the professionals of theory themselves.

Let me now further illustrate and substantiate the claim that, in feminist standpoint arguments, this defocalized intellectual persona secretly dominates the focalized one of "being a woman." My aim throughout, in highlighting this self-referential aspect of feminist theory, will be to emphasize the situational *difference* between representers and represented, the gap or hiatus which separates the spokespersons from the realities (or groups) that they speak for, i.e. to signal their peculiar autonomy and "strangeness" over against their objects (or subjects) of representation.

35. Cf. Dick Pels, "The Politics of Symmetry," *Social Studies of Science* (May 1996), Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 277-304; Dick Pels, "Privileged Nomads. On the Strangeness of Intellectuals and the Intellectuality of Strangers," forthcoming in *Theory, Culture, and Society*, 1997.

36. Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), pp. 243-45; Bourdieu, *Sociology in Question* (London: Sage, 1993), pp. 43-45; Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), pp. 44-45.

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This implies a sustained critique of the strong tendency on the part of the representers to *identify* themselves with the represented (with the chosen class, gender, or race), in a classical metonymic "disappearance trick" which paradoxically ensures a unique legitimacy and authority for those who have formally disappeared from the scene.

Hartsock's influential extrapolation of Marxism toward a feminist historical materialism already evidences the basic pattern of slippage between "woman" and "feminist" which is repeated in many subsequent critical texts. She makes abundantly clear that at least two additional factors are required in order to transform women's experiences into credible feminist standpoints: *science* and *struggle,* which not accidentally count among the unique assets and dispositions of politically committed (feminist) intellectuals. Whereas "women's lives make available a particular and privileged vantage point on male supremacy, a vantage point which can ground a powerful critique of the phallocratic institutions and ideology which constitute the capitalist form of patriarchy," this standpoint "must be struggled for and represents an achievement which requires both science to see beneath the surface of the social relations in which all are forced to participate, and the education which can only grow from struggle to change those relations." The feminist standpoint is achieved rather than obvious; it represents a mediated rather than immediate understanding. This closely follows the Marxian model, in which the proletariat must likewise be educated through science and struggle in order to be transformed (by its political educators and leaders?) from a class "in itself" into a class "for itself."[37]

As Marxists draw epistemological consequences from the *economic* division of labor, so Hartsock intends to revalue the *sexual* division of labor in terms of a radical epistemological claim (i.e. one typically made by a *professional of theory*). In the process, "women's situation" is subjected to a string of positive idealizations, which prepare it for its function as ontological grounding and teleological guarantee of the feminist critical project. Women's activities, it is argued, stand closer to the necessities of material life, embody a more intimate unity with nature and the reproduction of life,

37. Hartsock, "The Feminist Standpoint," pp. 284-85, 288, 302-4. The slippage between "woman" and "feminist intellectual" is also evident in Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 58, 86. Cf. also Lukács' view that "historical materialism grows out of the 'immediate, natural' life-principle of the proletariat; it means the acquisition of total knowledge of reality from this one point of view. But it does not follow from this that this knowledge or this methodological attitude is the inherent or natural possession of the proletariat as a class (let alone of proletarian individuals). On the contrary . . ." Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness* (London: Merlin Press, 1983), p. 21.

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and are oriented to use rather than exchange. They also exemplify a closer unity of mind and body and cultivate a more relational and connected sense of self, whereas men typically define themselves as separate and disconnected.[38] Taken together, such female experiences evoke a stark contrast with what is called "abstract masculinity" and its constitutive dualisms of culture vs. nature, mind. vs. body, connection vs. disconnection, or reason vs. emotion. The feminist standpoint based on women's relational self-definition and activity exposes the world of men and their understanding of it as "partial and perverse." Hartsock also copies the antinomic structure of the Hegelian/Marxian dialectic, in order to frame the historical mission of women (or that of feminists?) in a manner reminiscent of the young Marx's eschatology of the proletariat: "By drawing out the potentiality available in the actuality and thereby exposing the inhumanity of human relations, [the feminist standpoint -DP] embodies a distress which requires a solution. The experience of continuity and relation — with others, with the natural world, of mind with body — provides an ontological base for developing a non-problematic social synthesis . . . which does not depend on any of the forms taken by abstract masculinity . . . Generalizing the activity of women to the social system as a whole, would raise, for first time in human history, the possibility of a fully human community."[39]

Idealization and Identification

The romantic transcription of the proletariat finds a close match in more recent versions of standpoint theorizing which wish to "change the (epistemological) subject." They all proceed from an idealization of the represented primary identity to an identification with it and thus legitimate a covert self-idolatry or self-aggrandizement of the spokesperson and his/her professional way of life.[40] Heinzen, an early critic of communist intellectuals such as Marx, already noted that "these gentlemen are head over heels in love with the proletariat," and went on to ridicule the supreme coquetry of intellectuals who too readily identified with it.[41]

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38. Hartsock, *op. cit.*, pp. 290ff.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 303-5.
40. A telling example of such projections is Kristeva's hysterical intellectualization of experiences such as pregnancy and maternity, and her depiction of woman as generically dissident and "exiled," in a text explicitly dealing with the emergence of a new type of *intellectual*. See Julia Kristeva, "A New Type of Intellectual: The Dissident," in Toril Moi, ed., *The Kristeva Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 296-98).
41. Karl Heinzen, "Gegen den Kommunisten," in *Die Opposition* (Mannheim: Heinrich Hoff, 1846), pp. 56-57.

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This matches a more recent remark by Bahro that the Marxist intellectuals "always had an idealized picture of the 'worker,' one that referred to no one other than themselves."[42] Apparently, there is also a definite sense in which feminists are in love with womanhood in general, which testifies to a more intricate and ambigous self-centeredness, precisely because "being a woman" constitutes the identity of women intellectuals in a more radical and intimate fashion than proletarian identifications are able to do in the case of bourgeois males.[43]

Such "loving" identifications are also cultivated by Hill Collins, who has extended feminist standpoint logic to black feminist thought, and thus begins more specifically to address the issue of the "crossing" of marginal identities. Black women's experiences and ideas suggest the contours of a distinct "Afrocentric" worldview which is in all respects opposed to the "Eurocentric" one, although it remains unarticulated and is not fully developed into a self-defined black feminist standpoint. African-American women occupy a peculiar "outsider within" status within Eurocentric culture, which stimulates a special black women's perspective on self, family, and society. However, the black women's standpoint may not be clear to black women themselves; which is why black feminist *intellectuals* must "produce facts and theories about the Black female experience that will clarify a Black woman's standpoint for Black women." Black feminist thought hence consists of specialized knowledge created by African-American women which clarifies a standpoint *of and for* black women.[44] As in white feminism, a process of transformation is needed, which must be guided and processed by critical theory and by struggle for self-definition and self-revaluation. In thus articulating the taken-for-granted knowledge shared by African-American women, black women intellectuals provide "unique leadership for Black women's empowerment and resistance."[45]

It is sufficiently clear that the actual focus of Hill Collins' efforts is precisely the peculiar "outsider within" status suffered by black women *in*

42. Rudolf Bahro, *The Alternative in Eastern Europe* (London: Verso, 1981), p. 193.

43. But see note 7. Is this love "Platonic" or a more earthly, bodily, lesbian love? It is not far-fetched (or overly insulting) to surmise that lesbian intellectuals creatively mix the two. In any case, lesbian feminists have had an exemplary function for the movement as a whole (cf. Haraway, *op. cit.*, pp. 137-38, 144), perhaps on account of their double (or triple, in the case of black lesbian feminists) experience of marginality. Cf. De Lauretis on lesbians as "eccentric subjects" (Teresa de Lauretis, "Eccentric Subjects: Feminist Theory and Historical Consciousness," in *Feminist Studies* [Spring 1990], Vol.16, No.1, p. 145).

44. Hill Collins, "Learning From the 'Outsider Within'," pp. 16, 24 (my emphasis); *Black Feminist Thought*, p. 22.

45. Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-34.

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academia, or that of black feminist *thinkers* in social and political thought more generally. Her stated project is to prove and reclaim the authenticity, coherence, independence, and viability of an *intellectual* tradition of black feminist thought.[46] The collusion of gender and race oppressions even produces a triple marginality, which is induced by the exclusion of black women's ideas from mainstream academic discourse, and the curious placement of African-American women intellectuals in both feminist and black social and political thought. Black women intellectuals remain "outsiders within" in all three communities, since "the assumptions on which full group membership are based — whiteness for feminist thought, maleness for black social and political thought, and the combination for mainstream scholarship — all negate a black female reality."[47]

In Hill Collins' work, the metonymic slippage between representers and represented is therefore reiterated in terms of an identification of the marginal standpoint of a new type of intellectual spokesperson with that of "African-American womanhood," which is attributed to a generic estrangement from the Eurocentric world and worldview and a native resistance against its characteristic pattern of "dualistic" thinking.[48] Female black culture also potentially exudes an "alternative humanist vision of social organization,"[49] inasmuch as its practices of "sisterhood," "othermothering," its woman-centered communalism, and its unique forms of creative expression (cf. the black women blues tradition), yield novel definitions of self, family, work, and community, which profitably add up to an authentic and comprehensive "black humanism." Afrocentric culture is also said to provide the lineaments of a new anti-dualistic, anti-positivistic and "dialogical" epistemology, for which the call-and-response discourse mode of church services offers the original matrix and epitome.[50]

46. *Ibid.*, p. xiv.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
48. In her brief criticism of Bell Scott, Hill Collins is incidentally aware of this conflation between women and feminists (*ibid.*, p. 19).
49. Collins, "Learning From the 'Outsider Within'," p. 21.
50. Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-37. It is telling, in this context, that Hill Collins, while promoting the idea of an anti-positivist potential slumbering in Afrocentric female culture, voices satisfaction that the values and ideas which an Afrocentric feminist epistemology identifies as characteristically black "often bear a remarkable resemblance to similar ideas claimed by feminist scholars as characteristically 'female'" (*ibid.*, pp. 206-7). Apparently, an anti-positivistic and "dialogical" theory of knowledge can be accessed from a variety of primary locations and perspectives, which are all identifiable as standpoints of "outsiders within." Cf. Harding's view that the subject of liberatory feminist knowledge "must also be the subject of every other liberatory knowledge" ("Rethinking," pp. 66-67).

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It is interesting, at this point, to digress briefly to Gilroy's criticism of black feminist thought, precisely because he shows himself to be vulnerable to the same residual glamourization of black experience for which he severely castigates Hill Collins. Despite her overt distancing from all types of "gender essentialism," Gilroy nevertheless senses that another version of *racial* essentialism "is smuggled in through the back porch." In Hill Collins' transposition, the term "black" is assigned a double duty, since its epistemological and ontological dimensions are taken as entirely congruent. The term "Afrocentric" appears both as a synonym for "black" and as an equivalent of the word "feminist." This constant elision imports a classically "Leninist" vanguardism in Hill Collins' writing. Since black women are incapable of articulating the standpoint, "they need to be helped to do this by an elite cadre of black feminist intellectuals who vaccinate ordinary folk with the products of their critical theorizing. . . . Experience-centered knowledge claims . . . simply end up substituting the standpoint of black women for its forerunner rooted in the lives of white men."[51]

Here as elsewhere, Gilroy demonstrates an acute sensitivity to the role of "uneasy spokespeople of the black elite," who are seduced into fabricating a larger populist identity "as an expression of their own contradictory position." In doing so, they persistently mystify the (increasingly problematic) relation of relatively privileged castes within the black community with the black poor, "who, after all, supply the elite with a dubious entitlement to speak on behalf of the phantom constituency of black people in general. . . . Today's black intellectuals have persistently succumbed to the lure of these romantic concepts of "race," "people," and "nation" which place themselves, rather than the people they supposedly represent, in charge of the strategies for nation building, state formation, and racial uplift.[52]

Gilroy, who stubbornly ignores Collins' paramount theme of the "outsider within," which is so close to his own hermeneutics of "double consciousness," indulges in a romanticization and intellectualization of black culture which is quite similar to that of his opposite number. In his reading, black musical expression presumably reproduces a distinct "counterculture of modernity," since it is interpretable as a *philosophical* discourse which refuses the modern occidental separations of ethics

51. Gilroy, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53.
52. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

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and aesthetics and of culture and politics, albeit in the form of an intuitive folk knowledge. This subculture, it is claimed, "often appears to be the intuitive expression of some racial essence but is in fact an elementary historical acquisition produced from the viscera of an alternative body of cultural and political expression that considers the world critically from the point of view of its emancipatory transformation. In the future, it will become a place which is capable of satisfying the (redefined) needs of human beings that will emerge once the violence — epistemic and concrete — of racial typology is at an end. Reason is thus reunited with the happines and freedom of individuals and the reign of justice within the collectivity."[53]

Among feminist cultural theorists, it is perhaps Haraway who is most acutely aware of the intellectualist tendencies which engender such metonymic idealizations; her work on "cyborg feminism" also marks the most prolific shift from the idea of primal, innocently centered identities towards metaphors of estrangement, heterogeneity, and hybridity.[54] Although she sets a premium on establishing the capacity to see "from the peripheries and the depths," Haraway also cautions that there is "a serious danger of romanticizing and/or appropriating the vision of the less powerful while claiming to see from their positions." To see from below "is neither easily learned nor unproblematic, even if we 'naturally' inhabit the great underground terrain of subjugated knowledges." While such standpoints seemingly promise more adequate accounts of the world, "*how* to see from below is a problem requiring at least as much skill with bodies and language, with the mediations of vision, as the 'highest' techno-scientific visualizations. . . ." The standpoints of the subjugated are never innocent; they do not provide immediate vision. Subjugation is not sufficient grounds for an ontology; it might at most be a "visual clue." "Identity, including self-identity, does not produce science; critical positioning does, that is, objectivity."[55] This requires one to seek viewpoints that are "mobile," perspectives that are "unexpected" and "extraordinary," which do not express fixed identities but require split and contradictory selves who can critically interrogate such positions. The promise of critical objectivity is not found

53. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

54. Cf. Baukje Prins, "The Ethics of Hybrid Subjects: Feminist Constructivism According to Donna Haraway," *Science, Technology, and Human Values* (Summer 1995), Vol.20, No.3, pp. 352-367.

55. Haraway, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-93.

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"in the subject position of identity," but in "partial connection," in the joining together of partial views.[56]

Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?

Harding's work arguably represents the most comprehensive and lucid expression of modern feminist standpoint theory and may thus be most informative about its generic strengths and its difficulties. As in previously cited examples, Harding's writings feature an ubiquitous and inclusive "we" which permits a systematic elision between the broader category of "woman" and the narrower one of "feminist," i.e., the feminist *scientist* or *intellectual*; while her self-identification as an "outsider within" is also transcribed into a larger ontological marginality of women as such. The gap between the two identities and positions is characteristically bridged by means of *critical theory* and *political struggle*: women's experiences, although they provide an initial standpoint which promises a less partial and distorted perspective on male-dominated society, must be informed and corrected by feminist theorizing and feminist political engagement in order to create truly critical perspectives. Women's experiences, or the things women say, do not in themselves provide reliable grounds for knowledge claims. They may be good places to *begin* research, but cannot adjudicate which knowledge claims are preferable. Experiences may lie to us; they must therefore pass through the lenses of feminist theory; overcoming this spontaneous experiential consciousness is often a painful process of "second birth." In this sense, standpoint theory differs from an "ethnoscience" or an "identity science" project.[57]

The feminist standpoint hence projectively recasts the ontological condition of women as an experience of marginality which critically

56. *Ibid.*, p. 195. Other criticisms of the "intellectualist fallacy" from within feminism itself include De Lauretis, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-22; Alcoff & Potter, *op. cit.*, p. 14; Mohanty, *op. cit.*, pp. 71, 74; and, extensively, Grant, *op. cit.* Mohanty targets what she calls the "feminist osmosis thesis," which declares that "females are feminists by association and identification with the experiences which constitutes us as female," so that feminism is a mere effect of being female rather than a "highly contested political terrain" where "we cannot avoid the challenge of *theorizing* experience." Cf. also her criticism of Morgan's romance of "universal sisterhood" and of women's "natural transcendence." Grant likewise points to the "gap" and the "tension" between woman and feminist: "if 'woman' and 'feminist' were the same thing . . . women could speak for themselves and would not have to be spoken for in elaborate academic discussions".' *op. cit.*, p. 115.

57. Harding, *Whose Science?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 123, 127, 167, 276, 286-87; "After the Neutrality Ideal," *op. cit.*, pp. 582-83; "Strong Objectivity," *op. cit.*, pp. 343-44.

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invalidates traditional categories of (scientific) knowing. Whereas "androcentric" epistemologies conventionally define the scientific habitus as one of dispassionate, disinterested impartiality, as a concern with abstract principles and rules, "what it means to be a woman" is to be emotional, to be interested in the welfare of family and friends, and to be concerned with concrete practices and contextual relations. Because women are assigned the care of bodies (including men's) and of the localities where bodies exist (houses, offices, etc.), because they take up the care of young children, and are more generally occupied with "emotional work," they natively resist theories that tear knowledge from its social, sentimental, and partial contexts and describe it as transcendental and disinterested.[58] Women are, as such, "valuable strangers" to the social order, while men remain "natives" whose life patterns and ways of thinking "fit all too closely the dominant institutions and conceptual schemes." This alienation offers unique epistemological advantages, although once again it is feminist *theory* which must intervene in order to *teach* and *adjudicate* what is strange: "Because women are treated as strangers, as aliens — some more so than others — by the dominant social institutions and conceptual schemes, their exclusion alone provides an edge, an advantage, for the generation of causal explanation of our social order from the perspectives of their lives. Additionally, however, feminism teaches women (and men) how to see the social order from the perspective of an outsider. . . . Feminism teaches women (and men) to see male supremacy and the dominant forms of gender expectations and social relations as the bizarre beliefs and practices of a social order that is 'other' to us."[59]

The corollary of this strategic interposition of theory (and theorists) is that the constitutive principle of standpoint theory about the causal link between being and consciousness (or objective *position* and subjective *positioning*) is effectively reversed.[60] It is in all respects (feminist) theory which constructs and validates experience, and effectively dictates how "to see strange." As in the Marxist parable of the proletariat, one assists at a curious reversal of terms: while the (class, gender, racial) standpoint is taken as the point of departure of objectivity claims, it is to all effects the claim itself, the correct (proletarian, feminist, anti-racist) consciousness,

58. Harding, *Whose Science?*, *op. cit.*, p 47.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
60. In her recent work, Harding spells out more clearly that, although each of us occupies a determinate location in the matrix of social relations and oppressions, that location does not *determine* one's consciousness, e.g., in "Strong Objectivity," *op. cit.*, p. 345.

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which defines and validates the standpoint. Standpoints need spokespersons in order to be constituted as such; it is their representational work that ultimately "defines the situation" for "situated knowledges."

In a distinct sense, therefore, theory also *liberates* from standpoints: the "correct" consciousness opens up to the "correct" standpoint, even if one "naturally" occupies an "incorrect" one. Theory provides an alienative methodology, a procedural code of distanciation, which in principle is accessible for all of rational or emancipatory good will. Once again we are returned full circle to the methodological voluntarism which standpoint theory started out to combat. According to Harding, "thinking from the perspective of women's lives" makes strange what appears familiar, which is "the beginning of any scientific inquiry." Actually, however, such thinking must start in the lives not just of outsiders but of "outsiders *within*" (or feminist intellectuals), who are better placed to detect the relation between outside and inside or margin and center.[61] It is they who actually occupy epistemically resourceful "contradictory" positions ("a woman thinker is a contradiction in terms,"), and may therefore exploit the frictions and dissonances which arise between their disparate experiences. The "monster problem," which is usually phrased in terms of the supposedly incongruous identities of male feminists or white anti-racists,[62] is perhaps more internal and "visceral," because it marks a suppressed identity conflict of female or black intellectuals themselves. Indeed: *whose* science, *whose* knowledge is at stake here?

Like Marxist intellectuals such as Althusser, who claim the ability to *become* "proletariat" by adopting *theoretical* proletarian standpoints, feminist thinkers suggest that one may turn into a stranger by "thinking differently."[63] In principle, therefore, it is not necessary to have lived the experience of oppression in order to understand other oppressed identities or to generate what Harding calls "traitorous" analyses. Rather than marking out existentially "given" positions, the "traitorous" or "disloyal" social locations which Harding wishes (us) to occupy, are largely a matter of conscious engagement and self-education. Traitorous *locations*, one

61. Harding, *Whose Science?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-32, 150, 289; "Rethinking", *op. cit.*, pp. 65-66.

62. Cf. Alice Jardine & Paul Smith, eds., *Men in Feminism* (New York & London: Routledge, 1987); Harding, *Whose Science?*, *op. cit.*, pp. 274-75; Hans Harbers, "Het Monster Man," in Dick Pels & Gerard de Vries, eds., *Burgers en Vreemdelingen. Opstellen over Filosofie en Politiek* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep, 1994), pp. 85-97.

63. Althusser, *Écrits sur la Psychanalyse*, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-30; Harding, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

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might say, are actually traitorous *agendas*,[64] which can be methodically adopted, learned, and generalized beyond the hold of any specific primary social identity. Consciousness is decisive, not situation or place. Knowledge, or critical thought, may in principle emancipate itself from all situational determination. It is this vicious circularity and this voluntarism which ultimately turns standpoint theory inside out, and closely approximates the conventional transcendental view which it originally set out to criticize. If marginality is so much a matter of theoretical and political choice, the radical epistemological impulse of standpoint thinking is effectively rooted out.

The Reflexive Spokesperson

All three markings in the "holy trinity" of social identification (class, gender, and race) invite gestures of idealization which resemble Machiavelli's own deceptive claim as a "man of the people" to be able "to understand properly the character of rulers." The three standpoint theories tended to maintain this intellectualist posture in their converging drift toward a more abstract epistemology of strangerhood. In attributing epistemic privilege to a generalized condition of outsidership, they pictured it as ontologically continuous with the "primary" subject positions of workers, women, and people of color, while surreptitiously identifying the more ambiguous situation of the "outsider *within*" (i.e. of proletarian, female, or ethnic *intellectuals*) as the proximate embodiment of such privileged estrangement. A first-order "identity swap" is thus overhauled by a second-order one: the intellectual, while no longer exclusively posing as authentically (organically) proletarian, female, or black, now also acts as a generalized stranger, pooling the hermeneutic advantages of all three marginal identities in a new dream of "being everywhere."[65]

Theories about "situated knowledges," in sum, are likely to suffer from a vicious circularity which results from their efforts to derive objectivity claims from ontological "situations" which must first be "defined as real" before such claims can be contextually "situated." The presumed "last instance" determination of proletarian, female, or black life experiences simultaneously conceals and justifies the "first instance" domination of theorists who *intellectualize* the worker, the woman, or the black person; and in a secondary movement, also intellectualize the

64. *Ibid.*, p. 292.

65. Cf. Susan Bordo, "Feminism, Postmodernism, and Gender Skepticism," in Nicholson, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 135-36; Pels, "Privileged Nomads," *op. cit.*

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condition of marginality which is collectively attributed to them. In this fashion, the social determination of knowledge claims ultimately dissolves into a certain "free-floating" voluntarism of marginal intellectuals, who are unwilling to calculate the interests and advantages which define their specific *inter-esse* or "in-betweenness." The "outsider within" perspective, toward which the various standpoint theories interestingly gravitate, still underestimates the "monster problem" of critical, emancipatory intellectuals who prioritize their class, gender, or racial identities above their identities as marginal intellectuals, and, in doing so, erase the inequalities which separate them from the groups with which they politically and emotionally identify. Arguably, this secondary identity is less welcome because it is partly shared with the enemy (more precisely, with his organic intellectuals), and as such inevitably transects and dilutes the stark Manichean oppositions between male and female, black and white, bourgeois and proletarian which nourish political correctness and a defiant psychology of war.

If our purpose, then, is to preserve standpoint theory's kernel suggestion about the structural connection between marginality and creativity, we need to incorporate the performative logic of spokespersonship and the second-order marginality of intellectuals more intensely and reflexively into standpoint theory itself. Instead of denying the specific "treason" which inevitably accompanies their "translation" of social identities, marginal intellectuals should more definitely acknowledge the force fields that structure their specific role as strategic intermediaries between social movements and the academy. This requires a more precise demarcation between the condition of *alienation*, which situates the intellectual outsiders as "dominated dominants" in the social field, and that of *oppression* or *exploitation*, which describes the situation of the dominated *tout court*, which many variants of standpoint theory easily tend to conflate. Subjugation, Haraway rightly presumes, is not sufficient ground for a critical ontology; instead, oppression and exploitation normally invite the quite contrary reactions of particularism, closure, and apathy. This requires a novel recognition of intellectual elites as special groups, whose distinctive ambitions engage them in productive, "consciousness-raising" tension with their primary constituencies — in a form of reflexive "elitism" which counts on their *interested interaction* rather than *disinterested identification* with the "masses" which they claim to represent.[66]

66. Dick Pels, *Het democratisch verschil. Jacques de Kadt en de nieuwe elite* (Van Gennep: Amsterdam, 1993).

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What does this reflexive radicalization of positional thinking imply for the celebrated connection between marginality and conceptual innovation — the enduring "proceeds" of standpoint theory in its various historical manifestations? In answering this question, we may recollect a distinct ambiguity in the original Machiavellian metaphor of the mapmaker, who, unlike peoples and princes, may freely move between low and high places in order to collect a comprehensive picture of the natural landscape. The first part of the metaphor expresses the conventional idea (also encountered in Mannheim) that positional objectivity is enhanced through the complementarity and synthetic reworking of various partial perspectives. The second part, however, implies that such free exchanges are unlikely to occur between high and low places in the *social* pyramid, and that the "spectral logic" of the standpoint must acknowledge a principled dispersion of perspectives and the impossibility of their full totalization. It is unclear, moreover, to what extent Machiavelli presumes symmetry of epistemic resources between the people and the Prince, or rather anticipates an asymmetric claim, such as the Marxist one, which, while dismissing as absurd any idea of free circulation among the class positions of bourgeoisie and proletariat, also refuses to entertain the suggestion that, if one needs to become "proletariat" in order to know "capital," perhaps one also needs to be "capital" in order to know the "proletariat." Machiavelli's balance between the epistemic powers of people and Prince may well express the ambition of the self-styled "man of the people," if not to *become* a prince himself, then at least to become *closer* to the prince, as an advisor to the throne who commands a more comprehensive view of the political landscape than his sovereign master.

Sen has argued that, notwithstanding the "parametric dependence" of observation and inference on the position of the observer, objectivity may still be enhanced because different persons can occupy the same position and confirm the same observation, while the same person can occupy different positions and make dissimilar observations: observational claims can be both position-dependent and person-invariant.[67] More radical standpoint theories, however, rightly object that such person-invariance and positional transcendence are socially unlikely; that, in a hierarchically structured society, "you cannot see everything from everywhere," and that class-, gender-, or racially defined social experiences yield partial perspectives on the social world which cannot easily be totalized from

67. Amartya Sen, "Positional Objectivity," in *Philosophy & Public Affairs* (Spring 1993) Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 126, 129.

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any one of these perspectives. Positional parameters (or markings of social difference) differ dramatically to the extent that they operate closures and install boundaries which prevent individuals from "crossing over" to other places in the social universe. While Machiavelli's cartographer may travel from low to high, the people and the Prince do not change seats so willingly or easily. The only "changeling" in the social world, who is forced into transcendence of place and is able to view trans-positionally, is the marginal person or "outsider within," who, like Machiavelli, undertakes to mediate between low and high, or between margin and centre. Not a "nowhere (wo)man" or universal subject, but not a firmly rooted and particularized subject either, the "outsider within" holds a place between places and embodies an interest that mediates other interests. This enables him/her to operate local transcendences, take "third" positions, and forge "partial connections," which together delineate the small measure of synthesis and objectivity which is still available in the chronic "war of positions" waged in the social world.

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Making a Stand: Standpoint Epistemologies, Political Positions, Proposition 187

John Michael

Do Standpoint Epistemologies have a Point?

Standpoint epistemologies fascinate contemporary intellectuals, yet few of them seem to understand their significance or their implications. For example, in the recent over-publicized culture wars, standpoint epistemologies — frequently and mistakenly identified as various forms of philosophical or cultural relativism — have played a prominent role in conservative polemics against multiculturalism and literary theory (the unspecified relation between the two is one of the most peculiar aspects of these attacks). Thus, Dinesh D'Souza — to take the best known example — lumps a variety of "theories" together and criticizes them for attacking the bases of Western thought, the belief that knowledge is "value-free, disinterested, and universal." As D'Souza explains: "These fashionable scholars go by esoteric names — deconstructionists, postmodernists, structuralists, poststructuralists, reader-response theorists — but they are embarked on a shared enterprise: exposing what they say is the facade of objectivity and critical detachment in such fields as law, history, and literature."[1]

Standpoint epistemologies have also drawn fire from the Left. Todd Gitlin — himself a tenured radical — sounds remarkably like D'Souza on this point, though he does not find English professors uniquely to blame for the flight from truth: "Although alarmists of the cultural Right, claiming to speak for a single morality, trace this form of thinking variously to English empiricism, American anthropology, German Marxism, or

1. Dinesh D'Souza, *Illiberal Education: the Politics of Race and Sex on Campus* (New York: Free Press, 1991) p. 157.

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French deconstruction, the academy has no monopoly on the decline of the claims to truth. Perspectivists creep up everywhere, from op-ed pages to the Grand Ole Oprah of daytime talk shows in which Klansmen and Afrocentrists, anorexics and abusers, rapists and rape victims all get their hearings."[2] Gitlin believes that the decline of "truth" and the abandonment of the Enlightenment, which he admits has had a bad century, result from a willful perversion of Western traditions. But English empiricism, American anthropology, German Marxism, and even French deconstruction are each, in their own ways, specific legacies of the Enlightenment. These are not alternatives to but particular aspects of the Western intellectual traditions. I mention this not to score easy (and largely meaningless) points in this apparently endless debate, but to indicate how slippery the terrain grounding critiques of standpoint epistemologies can be.

On the other hand, those who defend or indeed celebrate standpoint epistemologies have similar problems. This can be done by intellectuals on the Right and the Left. Thus, Samuel Huntington advocates a view of global politics which appeals to cultural relativism to argue that the identity of the West must be preserved against the challenges and incursions of other cultures. Once again, the enemy is multiculturalism: "Multiculturalism at home threatens the United States and the West; universalism abroad threatens the West and the world. Both deny the uniqueness of Western culture. The global monoculturalists want to make America like the world. A multicultural America is impossible because a non-Western America is not American. A multicultural world is unavoidable because global empire is impossible. The preservation of the United States and the West requires the renewal of Western identity. The security of the world requires acceptance of global multiculturality."[3] The global politics Huntington advocates retools as cultural conflicts the policies of containment and domination that Cold War intellectuals legitimated in terms of ideology. Yet there is a persistent incoherence in his attempt to ground both global and domestic politics in culture, for the US has never been monocultural. In cultural terms, despite the depredations of dominant groups, the US has always been like the world: heterogeneous and conflicted. Such a culture offers no certain grounding for politics.

On the Left, intellectuals frequently want to claim that perspectivism or social constructionism (to offer two closely linked terms for standpoint

2. Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York: Henry Holt, 1995) p. 201.

3. Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), p. 318.

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epistemologies) offer what the feminist critic of science Sandra Harding has called a "Strong Objectivity" by grounding knowledge in a recollection of precisely the heterogeneity Huntington wants to forget. Critical Theorists will recognize some aspects of Adorno's negative dialectics and his critique of identity logic and reification in this position. A passage that Dick Pels cites from one of Harding's most influential essays illustrates both the promises and the problems standpoint epistemologies present for those who would attempt to ground a progressive politics in them. Harding writes "In societies where power is organized hierarchically — for example by class or race or gender — there is no possibility of an Archimedean perspective, one that is disinterested, impartial, value-free, or detached from the particular, historical social relations in which everyone participates. Instead, each person can achieve only a partial view of reality from the perspective of his or her own position in the social hierarchy. And such a view is not only partial but also distorted by the way the relations of domination are organized."[4] So far, Harding offers a trenchant critique of Mannheim's ideal of the "free floating" intellectual. Intellectuals, like other humans, never float free of a context of interests and urgencies that simultaneously enables and deforms their thinking. The problems with Harding's position, however, emerge in the very next sentence where the thinkers she has been so intent to ground suddenly begin to float away as she claims that some standpoints offer a clearer view of truth than others: "Further, the view from the perspective of the powerful is far more partial and distorted than that available from the perspective of the dominated; this is so for a variety of reasons. To name just one, the powerful have far more interests in obscuring the unjust conditions that produce their unearned privileges and authority than do the dominated groups in hiding the conditions that produce their situation." Objectivity gets reintroduced by the subaltern's entrance, so to speak. Contrary to what Donna Haraway, like Harding a well-known feminist critic of science, implies, there is no epistemological reason to believe that "vision is better from below the brilliant space platforms of the powerful" if by better you mean less distorted, more accurate, more impartial.[5] Better could

4. Sandra Harding, "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is 'Strong Objectivity'?" in Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter, eds. *Feminist Epistemologies* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993) p. 59, cited in Dick Pels, "Strange Standpoints," in this issue of *Telos*.

5. Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* (London: Free Association Books, 1991), pp. 190-91.

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mean, however, more interesting, useful, or inclusive given our own particular perspectives and agendas. In this sense I would certainly agree that from my standpoint the view from below is usually "better." This, however, is a political assessment, not an epistemological principle.

The problem is fairly simple. The existence of objective truth and value free knowledge cannot be convincingly challenged only to conclude by claiming that some groups are closer to these unavailable and illusory quantities than others. If we are all situated, if all our knowledge is partial and context specific, then there are no transcendent criteria available by which one might judge which perspectives are more objective or less distorted. At this point in the argument, opponents of standpoint epistemologies like D'Souza and Gitlin will claim I have made their case. Standpoint epistemologies stand accused of relativism, which in turn is associated with moral and political anarchy and the inability to make judgments. Without judgments no politics and no morality are possible. No one can make unequivocal judgments because no single standpoint or free floating, transcendent place is left from which to judge. The marginal and the oppressed, the stranger and the excluded speak from perspectives every bit as partial as those who speak from the comfortable complacency or the anxious paranoia of dominant positions.

The language of partiality and distortion that frequently figures in explanations of standpoint epistemologies begs the question these epistemologies raise. Partial and distorted in comparison to what? In other words, if all epistemologies are partial, in the sense of constructing worlds shaped by the beliefs and interests, history and traditions of specific groups in specific contexts or locales, then there is no more complete view of the world or of the truth available against which the partiality of these world views could be measured. Paradoxically, there are no partial or distorted views of the world on this level of abstraction because the assumption is that all views of the world are particular and therefore no universal criteria from which to judge partiality exist. In this view of things, judgments are always possible, in fact it would be impossible to disable them. The grounds of judgment, however, must be acknowledged always to be questionable since no judgment can any longer claim, with any force, to be grounded in transcendent, immutable, or universal principles or objective truths. To put it simply, truths always exist but they are always also debatable, because standpoints other than one's own always exist as well. Moreover, in the present context, these standpoints are frequently and constitutively in conflict.

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Intellectuals in Good Standing

To many, this may seem like a fine, relativistic mess. But the answer to charges of relativism and moral anarchy is not messy at all, it is merely paradoxical. If all standpoint epistemologies are complete and none are partial then relativism, in the radical sense of moral indifference, is not an option. As Donna Haraway has argued, relativism is merely a disguised version of appeals to objective, universal truth — it is a "god trick."[6] This is a way of saying that while objectivity and universality may not be available neither is it possible to avoid judgment by reference to a value free and decontextualized impartial view of other partialities which relativism would require. One is constrained to judge and it is always possible that one's judgments will be wrong. Also, within specific constraints and with particular ends in mind, some judgments and some perspectives will be better and more useful than others. The criteria for judgment, however, will not be of greater or lesser proximity to a single, univocal truth. Thus, while they may not offer an undistorted vantage point on the perverse partialities and determinate mystifications of power, the perspectives of the marginalized or excluded, exploited or oppressed — be they women or workers or homosexuals or people of color — remain crucial in challenges to the depredations and impositions of power in part because the powerful must refuse to see them to consolidate and legitimate their dominance. Huntington, for example, does this when he "forgets" that multiculturalism has always been an American problem. In this context, marginalized identities can offer a vantage point on the errors and lies and injustices of the dominant culture or society — its racism, sexism, homophobia. This vantage point, in our current political environment, still retains some moral and persuasive force.

How can that be? Those of us who have been interpolated by certain discourses and traditions in the West, especially certain traditions associated with the place and functions of intellectuals in modern societies, hold certain values to be fundamental to our culture. Admitting that these may be historically conditioned and context specific makes our commitments to justice, equality, compassion, rationality, and freedom no less fundamental. The force of these words is such that it would be difficult to find

6. Haraway writes: "Relativism and totalization are both 'god tricks' promising vision from everywhere and nowhere equally and fully, common myths in rhetorics surrounding Science. But it is precisely in the politics and epistemology of partial perspectives that the possibility of sustained, rational, objective inquiry rests." See "Situated Knowledges: the Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," in *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 14, no. 3 (Fall 1988), p. 584.

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responsible parties in any public debate who would not want to claim them to characterize their position. It is often from the viewpoint of the exploited and the oppressed that the injustices, inequalities, cruelties, insanities, and impositions of our society can be made most clearly visible.

In making this claim, I am not making a statement about universal truth or absolute, value free judgments or degrees of objectivity. I am continuing an argument in a context where these large, Enlightenment abstractions still seem to be worth fighting over. I am also anxious that these abstractions might cease to be the rhetorical levers that can move people to act, that the values of the West — though I do not think they are uniquely Western — might become so transformed that these markers would no longer function at all. Because such things are culturally constructed and historically conditioned, such developments and transformations are always possible. Yet, I am not too pessimistic. In claiming that my belief that beliefs are culturally constructed and historically conditioned has, strictly speaking, no simple or determinate relation to my politics I am claiming two things, and I am certainly neither the first nor the last to claim them. First, standpoint epistemologies seem to me to be useful since they open up new ways of conceiving the origins of differences in an increasingly heterogeneous and fraught social environment where the provenance of terms like local and global seem increasingly confused. Second, these epistemologies are neutral or nugatory with regard to politics, morality, judgment. One can advocate a version of standpoint epistemology as cultural relativism as part of a justification for neoimperialism, as does Samuel Huntington, or one can advocate a return to a univocal moral and social vision as a crucial aspect of a progressive political program, as does Todd Gitlin. But in neither case does the political position advocated flow in a necessary or determined way from the epistemology embraced. Moreover, both these positions are in error. On the one hand, I find Huntington's appeals to a putative Western identity stripped of the West's ideological commitment to ideals of justice and fairness and placed in the interest of a globalized *Kulturkampf* incoherent in its own terms. It is unpersuasive in its construction both of the West it purports to defend and of the other cultures that confront it. On the other hand, I find Gitlin's attempt to insist that one's own viewpoint is the only one worth considering unlikely to bridge many differences, even though difference is what he claims he wants to overcome. Thus I dispute both these positions, but in neither case do disagreements about epistemology figure largely. Similarly, in response to Harding and Haraway, the view from below in so far

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as we are able to construct it is better not because it is less distorted or more objective but because in light of our political commitments and acculturated values such a view can be useful in furthering causes and advancing positions that appear more just — although in some cases, e.g., rural proletarians forming militias or dispossessed city kids forming gangs, the view from below may not be that attractive. Once again, epistemology would not be the most crucial part of the discussion.

If standpoint epistemologies are largely inconsequential, then why do they attract all this critical anxiety and honorific attention? One reason, as many have argued, may be a sociological and historical reflection of the altered role of intellectuals in contemporary society. Standpoint epistemologies accord well with the humbled mood of intellectuals in the age of postmodernity. As Zygmunt Bauman put it, where modern societies once depended upon various forms of knowledge and ideology production for their legitimation, these days they tend to legitimate themselves by and through the circulation of commodities. Intellectuals, therefore, stripped of their legislative function can find employment for their rhetorical expertise as interpreters instead of legislators, translating between cultures and subcultures in an increasingly heterogeneous and conflicted social and global order.[7] Bauman's vision is attractive, yet like other cultural relativists he underestimates the extent to which the necessary desire to legitimate, to legislate, and to judge in a context ruled by conflict remains intrinsic to any intellectual understanding of other cultures. No representation of another culture can ever be neutral or objective and no culture can exist without such representation. As Dick Pels puts it, "standpoints do not simply exist in the real world in order to be 'recognized for what they are' or 'taken responsibility for,' all standpoints need to be *spoken for* in order to become constituted as standpoints in the first place."[8] Intellectuals construct as they represent and therefore some degree of legislative and normative imposition is unavoidable in the conflictual context that determines what they do.

Nonetheless, standpoint epistemologies, if they remind us that other viewpoints besides our own may be worth considering, are not pointless. They may offer some measure of correction for the most overweening claims that intellectuals have traditionally made concerning the various

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7. Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-Modernity, and Intellectuals* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).

8. Pels is quoting Adrienne Rich, "Notes towards a Politics of Location," in *Blood, Bread, and Poetry: Selected Prose 1979-1985* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1986), p. 219.

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historical subjects they have tended to invent while pretending to describe — the proletariat, the third world peasantry, the stranger, or the outcast. At least standpoint epistemologies urge us to listen a bit before we begin to speak. This is a modest benefit for a modest, if desperate, age.

Those who celebrate and those who deplore standpoint epistemologies, however, often share a similar misconception reflecting a similar desire. This is a less modest and thoroughly theoretical desire. They seem to offer an account of why we disagree, of why politics is so often conflictual. Since Plato attempted to put an end to the endless squabbling of Athenian democracy, all philosophy has responded to this desire to adjudicate all disputes once and for all, to rule disagreement out of court. Each side argues that one needs a proper account of epistemology or ontology in order to ground a proper politics. Those who attack standpoint epistemologies claim that they disable political judgments and action; those who celebrate them hope, as we have seen, to ground political judgments and actions in them either by finding a new historical subject for whom to speak or by offering oneself as a qualified interpreter to mediate conflicts across the various boarders within society. I have already argued that both these positions mistake their relation to the theories they resist or embrace. As we have seen, standpoint epistemologies and social constructivism can be evoked to legitimate a diverse array of political positions ranging from the feminism of Sandra Harding to the neoimperialism of Samuel Huntington. In each case, the turn to epistemology marks a desire as old as Plato to ground politics in such a way that politics would no longer be a problem. The philosopher king, the intellectual analyst, the oppressed subject can deliver the word that will end all argument and judge all positions. It is this hope, that theory will ground politics in such a way as to make politics obsolete, that both these positions share. In both cases, I think, it is a mistake. If critical intellectuals still constitute a politically useful class, they cannot fulfil their function by seeking a grounding for politics outside the political arena itself. To think otherwise is a pipe-dream.

Proposition 187, Where we Stand

Moreover, I would add, this mistake is one with which I would charge many of my fellow editors at *Telos*. It is a mistake that became, from my perspective, painfully evident in the recent controversy over California's lamentable passage of Proposition 187. For the populism reflected in the essay by Piccone and Ulmen that prefaces the Special Issue on Populism

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II embraces a certain form of standpoint epistemology to justify (or at least to refuse a critique of) the sorts of restrictions on emigration envisioned by California's passage of Proposition 187. As is the case for Huntington, what is at stake for Piccone and Ulmen is the cultural identity of US communities and by implication of the West itself.

When Piccone and Ulmen speak of populism as the return to "a useful past" and lament that the clock cannot be turned back "to reinstate the *status quo ante*" they have recourse to a moment of homogeneity and organicity in the American sense of community that has, on this continent, never existed.[9] The sort of homogeneity that nativists dream of preserving or reclaiming by restricting immigration to Europeans, for example, has always been an illusion. Populists have historically disguised the racist agendas underpinning their communitarianism by determinedly forgetting the presence within US communities, from the very beginnings of European settlement, of imprisoned Africans, conscripted Asians, dispossessed Native Americans, and (after the middle of the 19th century) expropriated Mexicans. Such forgetting of familiar historical facts is one indication of how frozen the identity logic of their dreams is. At base, such policies aiming to preserve European identity by restricting immigration are always racist. Piccone and Ulmen do not succeed in avoiding or obviating this point by reference to "culture" and by implicitly advocating, as does Huntington, a standpoint epistemology or social constructivist view of values to do so: "preference to European rather than Asian or African immigrants is not necessarily racist. There is a cultural dimension to the social composition of the US, and the desire to maintain a Western society with a Judeo-Christian profile is neither irrational nor xenophobic."[10] Interesting here, as in Huntington, is a certain incoherence and failure of consequentiality in their argument. According to their claims, there might be a basis for the unsavory practice of restricting immigration by religious affiliation — no Moslems or Buddhists (or in another age Catholics or Jews) need apply. To me, this does not quite seem to be in accord with the ideals or values of "America." As Piccone and Ulmen say, however, communal practices in the republic have often been at odds with the republic's ideals: ". . . the concept of a community

9. I have argued this point at greater length elsewhere. See John Michael, "Critical Intellectuals and Identity Logic: Politics, Representation, and Community," in *Telos* 101 (Fall 1994), pp.117-136.

10. Paul Piccone and Gary Ulmen, "Introduction," in *Telos* 104 (Summer 1995), p. 10.

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based on 'blondness' or 'whiteness' is certainly alien to the ideals if not the practice of the American republic." But if intellectuals content themselves with championing communal practices, who will speak for the ideals by which those practices purport to legitimate themselves even as they betray the republic's principles? But even given the premise, with which I disagree, that cultural homogeneity in a community is necessarily a positive goal or even an attainable end, what, in light of the remarkably long history of cultural exchange between the West and the rest of the world, warrants the assumption that Africans are not participants in "our" culture or that Asians are simply beyond the pale of US identity? Without African contributions there would be no US culture; without an Asian presence US society would be unrecognizable.

Finally, what does assimilation mean here anyway? One of the oldest traditions of the West, and one that intellectuals have traditionally defended, is its openness to and toleration of differences and of change. If populism means attempting to freeze US society into a homogeneous, white, Protestant enclave that would never have allowed my grandfather to enter from Lebanon nor Piccone to land from Italy, then I take a stand which says that populism — and the standpoint epistemology by which a refusal to critique its errors may be legitimated — offers no real solutions to the problems that confront us as an historically and continuingly heterogeneous community.

Piccone and Ulmen write that "Unless populism succeeds in developing and implementing a rigorous federal agenda focused on communal practices rather than government policies, this growing resentment [engendered by Federal programs like affirmative action] may lead to some of the worst features populism has occasionally displayed during times of decline, desperation and frustration." Lynching, by this logic, was a communal practice — the expression of community resentments by at least one segment of the community's population against another if any ever existed. Yet it seems to me disingenuous to claim that lynching was simply an expression of populist resentments stirred up by federal interventions, like the abolition of slavery. The victims have their perspective and resentments as well. Like slavery itself, lynching is a crime perpetrated by one group upon another in a heterogeneous community structured by conflict and differentials of power. Such communities and such contexts offer no clearly defined or unambiguous boundaries or interior within which to ground oneself. One must decide where one will stand. Similarly, to blame contemporary racism on the federal and local policies meant to redress it, to credit the complaints of "whites," mostly males,

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who "today feel disenfranchised and marginalized" while, as a group, they continue to control and protect the vast majority of powerful, influential, and prestigious positions in the economy, the society, and the public sphere is already to yield to populism's worst impulses. This is the impulse to blame the victims of the social economic order not only for their own suffering but also for the sufferings and decline of society as a whole. Thus, the declining standards of living for the vast majority of US citizens of all races and most classes gets blamed not on the increasingly rapacious policies of finance capitalists represented by the Federal Reserve Board nor on the increasingly irresponsible conduct of manufacturing and managerial capitalists nor on the unprecedented expense of maintaining a peacetime military on a wartime footing for over fifty years nor the irresponsible reluctance of the same white males to pay a fair share of taxes but on the minuscule portion of the federal and state budgets assigned to assist families with dependent children and others whom an economic system structurally dependent on unemployment victimizes. Thus the poverty and desperation of inner city communities — peopled by a variety of races — is not linked to the decimation of the manufacturing economy which has hit areas like South Central Los Angeles and Detroit particularly hard. Instead, it appears to be the result of the subsistence allotments local governments increasingly refuse to pay or of the supposed influx of immigrants from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Pressed, *Telos* editors would, I think, support any of these propositions. But refusing to contest them, in the guise of respect for the viewpoints of those who express them, they end up echoing and legitimating them and obviating their own function as critical intellectuals.

What is needed is a new way of imagining identity and community, one in which ideological monoliths like the West, Judeo-Christianity, the Enlightenment, and community itself are subjected to a critique of the identity logic that masks the violence undergirding their reification. This is the work of critical representation and it is the intellectual's job to do it. Awareness of the modesty urged by standpoint epistemologies may assist us in this work, but it cannot furnish a grounding for our politics. In the shifting contexts and borders of conflicted and hierarchical communities, the only grounds we will find — as intellectuals in the Enlightenment tradition — are the grounds we make by taking a stand.

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*Is the Problem Drug Addiction or Society? Amoral Reflections on the Postmodern**

Claude Karnoouh

The attention paid by Western governments to drug addiction is generally predicated on considerations of public health and social order. Yet, by focusing on consequences rather than causes, public authorities seem to neglect the source of the problem. In fact, the latter may have to do with, e.g., the withering away or even the extinction of the process of socialization through work in the more developed nations — something which can be correlated with the social impact of the deregulation of job markets, the ultraliberal bent of techno-economic development, and the domination of industrial by financial capital. When presented first and foremost as a social concern, does not drug abuse become an excuse to ignore reality? Treatment seeks to cure, but is it not also a diversion? By concentrating exclusively on the spectacular and morbid aspects of the problem is reality not obscured — according to the old Platonic formula that truth lies behind appearances? Does not immediacy only blur its origin by covering the phenomenon with a veil — a veil that allows humanist values to seem grounded, even though they are increasingly losing consistency and being cynically refuted?[1]

The usual claim that "it is not drugs that create addicts" suggests

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* Translated by Joe Fiorill. This is the edited text of a lecture originally delivered at the "Journées de Reims pour une Clinique de Toxicomane," December 8-9, 1996.

1. This also happens in the case of humanitarian aid: its generous vocabulary and its strategy-tainted charity stands before politics as a screen concealing the eminently economic nature of modern warfare, which engenders the very misery it seeks to relieve.

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another: "What if addiction were nothing but a symptom?" If it is not drugs that create addicts, what does? Could it be something even worse? The following comments relate to what Baudrillard calls "the transparency of evil." They approach drug addiction as part of a much more general spiritual crisis of the postmodern world.

Impertinent Reflections

A number of publications today describe, analyze and interpret the impact of a social mutation unprecedented in human history and perhaps as fundamental as the neolithic revolution. It is nothing less than a veritable anthropological transformation of Western humanity. Therefore, no slogan, no sociopolitical intervention, no socioeconomic adjustment, no social treatment can change its course. Its most spectacular manifestation is the accelerated decomposition of social bonds following the disappearance of the human role in productive labor. For several centuries, labor — whether in its archaic agrarian or its modern industrial form — determined the social and political organization of Western societies and, indeed, of the whole world. Today, the disappearance of the human role from productive labor means that it no longer acts as a means for the organization and representation of the *socius*.

This decomposition of social bonds can be seen in a series of instances of desocialization: the end of rural life; the end of artisanship; the end of neighborhoods and the corresponding unprecedented development of the megalopoles and their ghettos; the cities' reversion to a third-world environment;[2] and the end of social responsibility on the part of business (i.e., the end of that paternalism by employers and the welfare state meant to protect labor-management agreements won through long, hard battles — agreements fulfilling an integrating function for displaced rural people and artisans). Along with the generalization worldwide of labor's precarious position and of industrial dislocation,[3] an ever growing proportion of the Western population is being pauperized, especially young adults — college-educated or otherwise. Despite the prolonging of familial dependence, this pauperization engenders young adults' "cocooning," which

2. This "thirdworldization" is not comparable to 19th-century social divisions in European cities, where people uprooted from various provinces found an existing labor culture within which they could be integrated — even if only that of violent labor struggles.

3. I.e., the practice among large multinational corporations of moving production to countries with cheap labor, often offering tax breaks to foreign companies, and lacking labor laws. While this is one of the causes of unemployment in developed countries, it has not led to harmonious development in the Third World.

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amounts to total despair concerning the future. European unemployment consistently reaches such high rates that this quantitative measure indicates a qualitative change among the unemployed. They no longer expect to find any work. Instead, they feel excluded from and even rejected by society. All of this is taking place along with the weakening of the integrating roles of traditional institutions such as churches, unions, schools, the military, etc. Furthermore, it is happening at a time when the political entity meant to protect these institutions, the nation-state, is experiencing a major legitimation crisis.

Faced with ever more concentrated economic power, business atomizes production sites and corrupts political power to recreate community solidarities that are both archaic and contrary to the general will. These solidarities, however, do not constitute political power as such, but operate through lobbying — that legal, postmodern form of corruption whose real aim is to obtain privileges based on distinctive ethnic, religious or (more generally) cultural traits, thus placing even more domains under the control of a mercenary logic. This new form of communitarianism is a sham: the bulk of its modes of existence are unified under the influence of globalized information and of needs engendered by advertising for identical consumer products imposed by the very massification of production and consumption.[4]

All of this can be captured under the following title: "Toward the End of the Political," or, "The Absolute Domination of Economics." Indeed, in becoming globalized, economics and its corollary, techno-science, have gained an autonomy that the political and social spheres are no longer able to brake, temper, moderate or redirect. In all its embodiments, economics presides over everyone's fate; this domination affects the very definition of human beings, which are now evaluated only in terms of utilitarianism and profit, i.e., as simple objects or raw material. Thus, employees have now become "human resources,"[5] on a similar footing as energy, mineral, agricultural and other resources. At the same time, due to the techno-scientific revolution, particularly computers, human labor counts less and less in

4. Cf. Claude Karnoouh, *Adieu à la Différence. Essais sur la Modernité Tardive* (Paris: Arcantère, 1993).

5. The supplement to the *Journal du CNRS* (National Center of Scientific Research), No. 81 (September 1996), explains the new organization of the CNRS in which, of the four departments attached to the general secretariat, one is called *Direction des Resources Humaines*. Did social science researchers, who allegedly engage in "critical thought," consider the implications of this redefinition of their professional role? This is another instance of capitulation to a vocabulary proper to economic neoliberalism, for which everything is invested with value, provided this value can be justified in terms of profitability.

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the added value of manufactured objects. For example, when the French government wished to sell the Thompson Corporation to the South Korean consortium Daewoo, the government was happy to simply give it away in exchange for the *franc symbolique*.[6] The implication is obvious: if machines have no value, neither do eighteen thousand employees. This is the true measure of the value of "human resources": in point of fact, a negative value. While classical capitalism exploited workers, the need for manual labor at least conferred on the labor force a sociopolitical value beyond economics. Exploitation was confined to a dialectic of conflict where those who had only the ability to work regained, in and through struggle, a social and political dignity the alienation of productive labor tended to strip from them. This was the period during which the proletariat was defined as a dangerous class. There lay, in various forms of political mobilization, the classical destiny of capitalist societies, as well as one of the sources of WWI and, last but not least, of the two great messianic totalitarianisms which in the 20th century overwhelmed Europe and the world with their *danses macabres*.

Today, workers are excluded from productive labor and its integrating struggles[7] in favor of an economic recuperation that, even beyond the social atomization it engenders, is part of a unifying totality that seems abstract to those uneducated in the tactical and strategic reasoning of macroeconomics. Henceforth integration, which takes place through consumption, expands until, thanks to a well-conceived credit system, it can extract the utmost from those least privileged. In their squalor, the poor remain a source of potential profit in the globalizing sphere of consumption. It is a novelty of the postmodern age that the poor are called to consume or, at the very least, to wallow in contemplation of advertising, which transforms what one does not have into a dream of attainable abundance. When Nietzsche first proclaimed "God is dead," he meant that "men no longer needed Him," that the world no longer behaved according to divine law. Today, this proclamation is realized in all its dazzling truth, in that commodities have replaced the divine even if, as Jean-Christophe Bailly writes, the latter lingers as a specter haunting mankind.

6. In French civil law, this refers to a contract by which the buyer promises to take over a business without spending a penny, while accepting its liabilities. Generally, such a maneuver entails drastic restructuring, including the dismissal of many employees.

7. In December 1996, the general strike by French truck drivers demonstrated to what extent — in various regions, at every location where they built their barricades, they met considerable solidarity among the populace — a solidarity they no longer suspected existed, owing to the nearly schizoid solitude to which their work confines them.

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Transcendence is therefore finished, or almost dying, despite a few outbursts of bigotry and the proliferation of theosophical sects. The divine no longer creates the world or organizes *Weltanschauungen*.[8]

When the *Iliad* ceased to be the expression of an intangible truth (the *mythos*), man lost direct contact with the gods. By becoming singular and later tripartite, the divine slowly became more distant, to the point of metamorphosing into an utterly cold and lifeless abstraction (such as Kant's divine providence or Hegel's god). Finally, after a long agony, it disappeared altogether. The world became secular, the political replaced the divine, which in turn gave way to the economic. This dynamic was interpreted as "the disenchantment of the world." The quest for salvation was no longer a search for eternal life. Rather, by theologizing the political and by means of a new piety whose transcendence was eminently fragile (a sign of the death of the divine), man sought an earthly embodiment of heaven, to be attained within a lifetime.

Was this not a reenchantment of the world by the political, whose ephemeral trajectory is all too familiar? It was a time when the *telos* was identified with the nation, the fatherland, the state, the people, or the proletariat, and justified faith in techno-scientific progress. Ever greater human masses were mobilized, and killed on an unprecedented scale in pursuit of this progress. This culminated with what Lyotard calls "the end of great discourses." This does not mean, as various ideologues have claimed, the victory of ethics after the "totalitarian sickness" (the themes of the later Habermas on communicative transcendence or Rawls' idealized ethical reconstructions). Rather, it sanctions the triumph of the economic, for which the political is no longer the guarantor of a contract but the tool for maintaining economic order.[9] When production becomes confused with consumption, when it enters the eternal business present of the circulation of currency and objects, it amounts to an absolute, uncontested victory for immanence. The quest for being is terminated by the quest for the most immediate material well-being.

What can be said about this change? What is this new revolution which has drastically disrupted life, and seemingly obliterated future possibilities?

8. Jean-Christophe Bailly, *Adieu. Essai sur la Mort des Dieux* (La Tour d'Aigues: Éditions de L'Aube, 1993).

9. This is the lesson of the Chilean experiment. There, socialism was overthrown by the armed forces in the service of "the Chicago Boys," the most radically neoliberal economic theorists — further proof that economic and democratic liberalism are not inextricably linked. Numerous other examples from Latin America and Southeast Asia also prove that economic neoliberalism can be in perfect harmony with dictatorial powers.

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The reenchantment of the world by the political — accomplished through bloody wars and concentration-camps — was worn down, cracked, and finally destroyed by the phenomenon it had helped to radicalize and even criminalize: the inexorable march of techno-science as the motor of the economic, with all its social consequences. The autonomy of the political succumbed to the dominance of what could be called the techno-economy. It is the latter which finally caused the implosion of the Soviet system — a system where the political sought to master the techno-economic sphere.[10] Today, Russia is paying the steep price of this implosion.

While complex in the details of its forward-looking calculations, the economic can nevertheless be reduced to this cycle: investment (capital) → technical innovation → production (capital and labor) → commodities (concrete labor transformed into abstract labor) → consumption (abstract labor transformed into currency) → profitable returns (initial capital + added value) → investment, etc. So it continues *ad aeternam*. In a Marxist interpretation, never disproven even by the champions of liberal economics who studied it very carefully, profits realized in a given area of production tend to fall and, after a time, can no longer be sustained. Profitability requires that new productions replace the old. For this reason, capitalism is essentially a constantly expanding production system requiring the gradual annexation of all spheres of human activity, transforming everything — every anguish, every necessity, even the most elementary needs (which change with technical progress) — into commodities. Furthermore, the system engenders new needs in order to create the permanent possibility of renewed commodities and profits. Thus, from the viewpoint of techno-economics, the *socius* is divided into two groups: on the one hand, the sum of all producers; on the other, the sum of all consumers — with the sum of the unemployed, who also cannot escape the law of profit, left over. The results of this double sum must be an exponential growth of profit and a continuing reduction in the costs of manufacturing processes, along with the constant, relentless search for cheap labor. This is the source of unemployment and of general job precariousness.

This cycle engenders a "commodification" of human beings — a phenomenon described by Debord as an integrated system of commodities.[11]

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10. On the prehistory of techno-economic domination in totalitarian systems apparently dominated by the political, see Nicolas Berdiaev, *Sources et Sens du Communisme Russe* (Paris: Gallimard, 1937); Ernst Jünger, *Der Arbeiter* (Stuttgart: Ernst-Klett Verlag, 1932); and Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Vols. I and II (Stuttgart: Günther Neske Verlag, 1961).

11. Guy Debord, *La Société du Spectacle* (Paris: Gérard Lébovici, 1989).

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To be sure, the spectacle as a political tool is not a new phenomenon. In the past, political power represented itself as a spectacle to the people or to itself, under the aegis of divine transcendence or, later, of its own political messianism. Nevertheless, it was just as much a *simulacrum* as every other spectacle. Today the *simulacrum* engendered by the spectacularization of commodities claims no transcendence. Rather, it seeks to make believe that something is lacking by concealing its real nature — profit — in the guise of aesthetic values. In so doing, the *simulacrum* invests all commodities with the ideal values of wealth, beauty and good.

Here it is obvious why advertising plays such a key role in the dynamic of commodities. Extending its creative power to politics, it transforms politicians themselves into commodities. Thus spectacularized democratic politics has become a commodity like sport, and political stars are no different than any other stars: they must earn their keep. Thus the recent American elections cost over $1.6 billion. Yet, while the President makes promises, the decisions determining his policies are made by Wall Street and the Federal Reserve Bank.[12] Independently of elections and their ever growing costs, media interests are not prepared to absorb the inevitable fall of profits. Everything is bought and sold, including the political programs of candidates for the highest positions. Aristotle's man, the *zoon politikon*, has himself become a commodity: human value is now indistinguishable from exchange value. Politicians, as well as wage laborers and the unemployed are now products subject to the laws of the market. Commodities and profit, however, are but another form of their equivalent: money. Whatever his activity or status, man has become a real or potential monetary mass, even if in the case of the least privileged and the excluded this is only a negative potential. From the individual's viewpoint, this means that without money one is excluded from participation in the world of commodities as the embodiment of beauty, wealth and good. All that remains is the resentful contemplation of images on television and in the advertisements decorating the subways.

According to Aristotle, tragedy provided a cure for human *hubris* through *catharsis*. The spectacle of commodities also triggers psychosociological mechanisms that modify people's attitudes. These mechanisms can be reduced to the intensification of greed, which individualistic ideology, presented as the only guarantee of liberty, transforms into a *bellum omnium contra omnes* constituting Hobbes' negative foundation of the

12. Cf. A. M. Rosenthal, "Trade is Clinton's Foreign Priority. Democracy and Rights be Damned," in the *International Herald Tribune* (Thursday, November 28, 1996).

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social contract — the *homo homini lupus*. How is greed satisfied in the world of commodities (i.e., that of permanent need and the sense of lacking something), if not with money?[13] The problem of drug abuse among adolescents and young adults should be analyzed in this context. For them, the fact that they have no future is neither a casual slogan nor a cynical posture but the most pressing existential truth.

In order to grasp the extent of the phenomenon, a few details should be added to this description of the world economy. Today this economy is no longer comprehensible within the framework of the Marxist dichotomy between base and superstructure, where the latter splits from the former in order to gain its own autonomy. Economics has become totalizing and globalizing; it dominates everything, all discourses legitimate it — even cultural ones. Arguments for deregulation always seek to minimize state intervention, while arguments for relocation weaken a nation's society and economy by means of an international division of labor that seeks cheap labor without social protection.[14] That one or the other argument is presented as a natural law that must simply be respected is one of many manifestations of the will of economic power to evade any constraints outside its own logic — all ethical imperatives, social contracts and the rules of any social agreement seeking to strike a balance in the division of created wealth between capital and labor. This constant outdoing itself by the economic takes place because expansion is the essence of its destiny. Such is the example provided by multinationals whose financial power surpasses that of many states[15] Even the nine richest countries can no longer

13. To realize how this works, one has only to consider that marvelous illusion of the spectacular *simulacrum* in which young Neapolitans indulge (Naples being a city with high rates of drug use): in late afternoon, enthroned on their Vespas, they brandish fake cellular telephones in order to show the girls they covet they too are men of substance.

14. It should be remembered, for example, that in the international zone of Penang, an Indonesian island, young peasants from remote villages, shut up in veritable camps, enclosed and guarded by armed men, earn $2.50 per day (minus the cost of food they eat in the company canteen) for ten hours of work making Nike tennis shoes that are then sold on the American market for an average price of $135.

15. Today the worldwide turnover of Ford or General Motors is greater than that of Portugal and Greece combined. "The largest 200 corporations' combined sales are bigger than the combined economies of all countries minus the biggest nine; that is they surpass the combined economies of 182 countries." See Sarah Anderson and John Cavanagh, "Worldwide Web: The Top 200 Corporations Account for an Alarming Share of the World's Wealth but Create Relatively Few Jobs," in *The Baltimore Sun* (October 13 1996), p. 1N. See also the most recent reports of UNICEF (the United Nations' Infants and Children Fund) and of the BIT (International Labor Bureau), which denounce child labor in the richest countries, including the US and Great Britain where, incidentally, it is legally prohibited.

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prevent financial speculation. In 1993, in one day of speculation against the franc, the Banque de France exhausted its reserves; only the power of the Bundesbank, acting according to Franco-German accords, saved the French currency. In 1995, Mexico was confronted with financial collapse when, in the course of a morning, private foreign investors (i.e., American and Japanese retirement funds) withdrew their stake in the Mexican stock market. With a loan unprecedented in G7 economic history ($50 billion), the richest nations barely avoided a flood of bankruptcies that would have led to a worldwide economic catastrophe. The Mexican economy was saved, but had to secure this loan by mortgaging all its oil resources, i.e., economic and, therefore, political independence. Since then, pauperization in Mexico has grown, illegal emigration to the US has increased, and American repression has intensified. This state of affairs can be traced directly to the free-trade agreement negotiated the year before (NAFTA) and presented by the defenders of ultraliberalism as the most perfect means for creating conditions more favorable to Mexican economic renewal. Pauperization and emigration in Mexico, loss of unskilled labor in the US: such a dynamic promises a bright future for the shantytowns and ghettos of the megalopolises both North and South of the Rio Grande.

The economic is globalizing because it is ever more financial and thus ready, ahead of its time, to use the computer revolution to support an immediate, planetary circulation of capital. It has made the earth a network of stock markets, the differential of whose monetary values engenders profits that no longer have any relation to real industrial wealth and productive labor. As such, the economic has been able to ensnare in its web what was traditionally called banditry or gangsterism — something hitherto relegated to the margins of legal society, of which it was the hideous underbelly. From the US, with ties between the Mafia, the political world, and the economic sphere, economic criminality has spread to other societies. As the economic became a system of worldwide interdependence, economic criminality also globalized. After the fall of Communism, the ex-Soviet Bloc nations became part of it as well: "In all, more than 1300 criminal organizations can be counted in the Russian Federation."[16] Today, the Mafia is an integral part of the world economy. A recent study by the UNCTED (United Nations Commission on Trade, Economy and Development) estimated the profits produced worldwide by the drug trade in 1995 at $500 billion, i.e., about $2 billion per day. A financial mass of

16. Cited by Michel Chossudovsky, "Comment les Mafias Gangrènent l'Économie Mondiale," in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, No. 513 (December 1996).

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this magnitude (to which another $500 billion should be added from weapons, nuclear materials, prostitution, gambling, etc.) implies certain economic investment strategies that implicate not only large-scale traffickers (who often disguise themselves as respectable "businessmen") but also, and more importantly, the banks through which this money is laundered, then recycled, in the great carousel of capital.[17] This financial mass helps what remains of the political sphere maintain "law and order" worldwide — that "new international economic order" which keeps in their place wealth and poverty. One need only recall the role of drug money in financing the *Contras* in Nicaragua; in arming the anticommunist guerillas of the Thai high plateaus of the Golden Triangle, or the various Lebanese and Afghan militias, etc. It is this new world order, due to the adjustments imposed by the IMF, that also forced the pauperized peasants to replace their traditional mixed farms with the cultivation of poppies and coca.[18] It is well known how drug money contributes to development in countries that, without it, would sink into total destitution, as in the case of Colombia, Bolivia, or the ex-USSR.[19]

By globalizing and integrating all possible sources of revenue, the economy has become criminalized while criminality has become globalized. Within the greedy *Weltanschauungen* peculiar to commodity fetishism, such sums can easily corrupt. A large-scale South American dealer admitted on television that any man can be bought: "it is only a question of price." The bitterness of his stare, however, betrayed the great risks these people take. It is no longer possible to uphold Western nations as models, since they have also sunk into corruption, despite well-established parliamentary democracies. Great Britain, Belgium, Germany, France, Italy: none of these countries have been able to institute changes resulting in different modes of behavior — whether against crooked politicians (i.e., the tip of the iceberg), French manipulators of phonybills, Italians involved with P2 or in

17. *Ibid.* Relevant here is the role of fiscal paradises that at once allow the most respectable banks to recycle drug money and private financial institutions to evade taxes. In these places — Switzerland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Channel Islands, Madeira, Gibraltar, Monaco, the Cayman Islands, Barbados, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, Saint Martin, various Pacific and Indian Ocean islands, etc. — the symbiosis of legal and Mafia financial sources accounts for about 15% of the worldwide GNP, or $3000 billion.

18. Chossudovsky describes how, under IMF-imposed constraints, millions of Bolivian miners were fired during the 1980s. With no resources but their severance pay, they began to cultivate coca.

19. It has repeatedly been reported how pharmaceutical industries in Poland, the Baltic nations, Russia and Ukraine have converted to manufacturing products such as amphetamines or Ecstasy which, priced very low, then invade Western markets.

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Tangentopoli, Belgian pedophiles. For this reason, no one pays much attention to the various scandals. The fatalistic character of economic discourse has only engendered resignation. At times, as in Belgium, in an emotional outburst, the anguished masses have peacefully occupied the streets of the capital. But the tension fades. Time goes by and nothing changes. No political group takes up the mantle of this anguish to attack evil at its roots. An evil presence — money — is at work. It is something more powerful than any threat of judicial sanctions.

On Drugs and Addicts

Some black American militants have claimed there is a conspiracy of the rich against the poor, which results in the authorities condoning the drug trade in the ghettos. While authorities may have occasionally turned a blind eye to drugs, paying attention only when they spilled out to the rest of the community, such an analysis is too simplistic and overlooks how economic globalization operates around the world. There is no conspiracy against the poor. There are only profits and greed, independent of conspiracy, but dependent on an economic dynamic which has become universalized. Indeed, in the world of commodities money seems to be the only thing, both concrete and abstract, able to provide meaning to people reduced to "human resources." Being excluded from money amounts to living as a castaway, in a state of permanent frustration. It further dehumanizes already atomized people who have lost all organic solidarity. What do they have left? Two alternatives still allow them to retain a positive image of themselves: the first is suicide, which would reaffirm their alienated freedom through an act of free choice; the second is to pretend. Drugs facilitate this pretense — this uprooting from the real which allows one to forget a banal and horrible reality. Here, pretending amounts to living on credit, drawing a draft on a radiant, hallucinated future where the wills of those who should be fighting injustice politically are never put to the test. By holding in reserve excuses for their delinquent behavior (something not entirely false), drug addicts turn themselves over to others. This is how they respond to the socioeconomic crisis. They psychologize it by psychologizing themselves. They interpret their sickness as the schizoid closure of their egos, unable to adapt to the new world of commodities.

By means of drugs, the world of commodities finally becomes available to the excluded. The emblematic figure of the addict is the negative confirmation of the joy of consumption, and therefore of the economic as the world's only truth. Indeed, the addict also stays out of politics: he

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rejects it in order to participate, at the lowest point on the social ladder, in the domination of the economic and its criminalization of politics. Precisely because he justifies his misfortune in terms of hedonism, the addict is at the very heart of the world of commodities. Through this dodge, however, the addict does not escape the machinery of profit. Here the political no longer has a place, and another of the Ancients' lessons has been forgotten: that struggle (*polémos*) always guarantees future harmony.

This is yet another instance of the formidable power of capitalism: its ability to co-opt the system's castoffs and to delude them into believing that they might still attend the banquet of exchange values, if only to feed off the scraps left over, i.e., to confirm the neoliberal certainties of the defenders of the new world order. The rulers refuse to decriminalize drugs because those addicted to drugs are the perfect scapegoat — they can be repressed without opening up the economic machine to debate, while at the same time allaying the fears of the masses already made mindless by televised images and dazed by the lack of a future.

There is, however, another solution: riots, revolt, struggle and, yes, revolution. But in societies haunted by the fear of precariousness and, above all, societies where the idea of well-being has replaced that of being *per se* — these terms have become obscene. Hegel wrote that only those who have no fear of death are true aristocrats. Yet today, apart from automobile accidents, plane crashes and sickness, death no longer has a rendezvous with postmodern superheroes. They are only sinister figures embodying millions of dollars. The new era is not one of heroism but one of heroin[20] — another modality of the *simulacrum* peculiar to the integrated spectacle of commodities.

20. Along with heroin, there are all sorts of substitutes such as methadone and subutex, whose effects are close to those of heroin but are prescribed by general practitioners and sold by respected labs. At any rate, this is the age of Prozac — a neuroleptic consumed massively by "normal" people and by everyone anguished by the lack of a future. According to *US News and World Report*, in 1995 there were 24 million Prozac users in 107 countries, i.e., 18 million prescriptions for an average turnover of $2 billion.

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*Confronting Globalization**

Alain de Benoist

Everyone is talking about globalization — a phenomenon all the more significant because it is generally considered inevitable and beyond anyone's control. What does it mean? Although there are many works on this subject,[1] the concept remains unclear. For some, globalization is a development beyond the nation-state. For others, it defines a new type of opposition between capital and labor brought about by the rise of finance capital, or a new separation between skilled and unskilled labor. Some see it as the expansion of world-trade with the inclusion of new players from the South (accompanied by the globalization strategy of multinational corporations), while others emphasize the broadening of exchange caused by the information revolution. What is it really?

First of all, *cultural* globalization must be distinguished from *economic* globalization. These two phenomena overlap, but are not the same. One of the most obvious features of economic globalization is the explosion of financial exchange. Today, international business is growing more rapidly than the various GNPs. In 1990 international exchange was

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* "Face a la Mondialisation," translated by John Lambeth and Deborah Shair

1. See Robert Reich, *L'Économie Mondalisée* (Paris: Dunod, 1993); Francois Chesnais, *La Mondialisation du Capital* (Paris: Syros, 1994); Jacques Adda, *La Mondalisation de l'Économie*, 2 Vol. (Paris: Decouverte, 1996); Samir Amin, *Les Défis de la Mondialisation* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996); Anton Brender, *L'Impératif de Solidarité. La France Face à la Mondialisation* (Paris: Decouverte, 1996); Jean-Yves Carfantan, *L'Épreuve de la Mondialisation. Pour une Ambition Européene* (Paris: Seuil, 1996; François Chesnais, ed., *La Mondialisation Financière. Genèse. Coût et Enjeux* (Paris: Syros, 1996); Elie Cohen, *La Tentation Hexagonale. La Souverainaité à l'Épreuve de la Mondalisation* (Paris: Fayard, 1996); Philippe Engelhard, *L'Homme Mondial. Les Sociétés Humaines Peuvent-elles Survivre?* (Paris: Arlea, 1996).

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already 15% of world business. In only five years, from 1985 to 1990, exports increased by 13.9%. Between 1960 and 1989, the exchange of manufactured products doubled while the flow of capital increased fourfold. During that time the nature of financial flow changed: the continuous development of direct foreign investment was accompanied by the ready availability of short term capital. These direct investments are also increasing more rapidly than world wealth. The annual rate of growth has gone from 15% between 1970 and 1985 to 28% from 1985 to 1990, during which time direct investments quadrupled in volume, going from $43 billion in 1985 to $167 billion in 1990. A global economy has emerged with an increasing share of GNP directly dependent on foreign exchange and international capital flow.

The other important factor is obviously the growing role of computers and electronics. By reducing the costs of long distance transactions and permitting communication in "real time" anywhere in the world, thus providing instantaneously information crucial to price structuring — information that used to take weeks to reach a few financial centers — the new communication technologies have made possible an unprecedented financial flow. The sun no longer sets on interconnected stock markets. Currency moves from one end of the globe to the other, searching for the best returns at the speed of light. This globalization, however, is exclusively financial: the currency market is the only one where instantaneous arbitrage makes sense.

Thanks to this increased mobility, made possible by computers, transactions on currency markets have experienced a fantastic growth. They now exceed a trillion dollars per day. These funds come from commercial bank holdings, multinational corporations, floating currency reserves held by central banks especially created for this type of transaction. The foundation of the system is the exchange of currency which, from day to day, or even hour to hour, may result in considerable gains, far higher than those derived from traditional industrial or commercial activity. In anticipation of moving exchange rates, computerization allows for the immediate virtual displacement of enormous amounts of currency, almost completely independent of the central banks. This is why this new phenomenon is called the "casino-economy."

Some commentators locate the origins of globalization in the early 1970s, at the time of the double shock of skyrocketing petroleum prices and the crisis of the international monetary system. At that time, the slowing of productivity and growth-rate, the progressive saturation of demand

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for durable consumer goods, the increasing burden of foreign financial constraints, along with the abandonment of fixed exchange rates and the explosion of the American trade deficit, led to a rise in purely speculative financial products. This process continued into the 1980s, with the growing public debt favoring the development of a vast currency market — especially with the wave of deregulation that, beginning with the Reagan Administration, rapidly spread to all developed nations. At that time, states began to retreat in the face of financial integration by adopting the "three Ds" — decompartmentalization, dumping the middleman, and deregulation. By liberalizing the capital market, this strategy allowed arbitrage at a global level and opened consumer markets and large corporations to foreign dealers. Then, at the beginning of the 1990s, the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union and the brutal switch in the former communist countries to unbridled capitalism translated into the entry of 2.5 billion additional people in the world market, while at the same time spreading the illusion of a unified planet within a single bloc.

The Monopolization of Capital

This series of events must be placed within a broader chronology. Far from being an aberration or a radical innovation, or even the result of some plot, globalization is simply part of a long term dynamic of capitalism. As Karl Marx already observed during the last century, "the tendency to create a world market is part of the very concept of capital,"[2] For Philippe Englehard, "globalization is undoubtedly only the grand finale of the explosion of Western modernity."[3] It justifies a whole series of metamorphoses throughout the long history of the mercantile economy — an economy based from the very beginning on open exchange within a climate of individualism and universalism, predicated on a metaphysics of subjectivity and material success. It began with the development of long term business at the time of the Italian city states in the 14th century, continued with the "great discoveries" and the industrial revolution, then with colonialism. Between 1860 and 1873, England had already succeeded in creating the beginning of a global commercial system. In July 1885, Jules Ferry declared to the Chamber of Deputies that "founding a colony means creating a market." By contributing to the disintegration of traditional cultures and societies in Africa and Asia, colonialism allowed the penetration of

2. Philippe P. Engelhard, *Principes d'une Critique de l'Économie Politique* (Paris: Arléa, 1993).

3. *Ibid.*, p. 543.

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Western products and opened new trade centers, a practice that would not be abandoned until it had lost its profitability, i.e., when the colonies began to cost more than they were bringing in.[4]

The market as an institution is itself inextricably bound with the internationalization of exchange. In classic 18th century economic theory, the free circulation of goods and services is already supposed to lead to the equalization of systems of production and living standards. As such, capitalism appears as a nomad from the very beginning. Thus, as Adda notes, globalization "merely brings capitalism back to its original vocation, more transnational than international, which is to play with borders as with states, with traditions as with nations, in order to better subsume all things under the single law of value."[5] Yet globalization also exhibits a number of new features. In addition to the fact that, in international exchange, it is now manufactured products that take precedence over raw materials, the financial sphere has acquired an extraordinary degree of autonomy in relation to real economic production. The great market deregulation of the 1980s effectively heralded the arrival of a capitalism no longer primarily industrial but speculative. The monetary mass circulating in the world today is estimated to be more than 15 times the value of production. This financial "bubble" aggregates funds from the private as well as the public sectors, be it the management of public debt by individual nations or retirement pension funds. It naturally encourages speculative and illegal logics: drugs and corruption become integral parts of the new economic order.

Another novelty is the universalization of the market. Transactions now involve previously independent sectors. Culture, services, natural resources, intellectual property are now part of the free trade mechanism. All things are now being transformed into currency. What enters the system as a living thing comes out as a commodity, a dead product. Furthermore, the players are no longer the same. Yesterday, these players were primarily nations. Today, they are multinational corporations that dominate investment and trade, while financial markets dictate the rules and the banks control a financial sector increasingly disconnected from the real economy. A world organized around nation-states is giving way to a "world-economy" structured by global players. This is a fundamental

4. "The rest of the events," said Marcel Mauss in 1920, "goes in the sense of a growing multiplication of loans, exchanges, identifications all the way to the detail of moral and material life." See his "La Nation," in *Oeuvres*, Vol. 3: "Cohésion Social et Divisions de la Sociologie," (Paris: Minuit, 1969), p. 625.

5. Adda, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1.

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transformation. Some decades ago, nation-states were still the natural political and social frameworks for managing the national systems of production. Capitalist competition played itself out basically among nations. The dominant trait of the capitalist system was thus territorialization, i.e., its attachment to a particular industrialized nation. Although expanding, the market was primarily national. Even for companies with foreign subsidiaries, it was crucial to have a mother-company located in a powerful nation. Economics and politics basically coincided, making national economic policy decisions all the more important. Finally, the Third World had not yet become part of the industrial system and there was a stark contrast between industrial centers and peripheries.

Today, the global integration of capital has broken down national production systems and has restructured them as so many segments of a global production system. The various components of production are now scattered far from the corporation's geographic location and sometimes even independent of its financial control. Products incorporate technological components of such varied origins that one can recognize neither the specific contribution of each nation nor the nationality of the labor force producing the merchandise. Robert Reich notes that when an American buys a car from General Motors for $20,000, less than $800 returns to American producers. Globalization is creating a reorganization characterized primarily by a generalized deterritorialization of capital. "Space of places" is being displaced by a "space of flux." In other words, *territory* is being replaced by *network*,[6] which no longer corresponds to a particular territory but is inscribed within the world market, independent of any national political constraints. For the first time in history, economic and political space are no longer bound together. This is the deeper meaning of globalization.

The appearance of industrial firms able to plot their development on a global scale and to implement integrated world strategies is one of the most characteristic traits of globalization. Multinational companies are those that do more than half of their business abroad. In 1970, there were 7,000 of them. Today there are 40,000 and they control 206,000 subsidiaries while employing only 3% of the world's population (about 73 million people). The budget of these corporations in 1991 was greater than all of the world's exports of goods and services ($4.8 trillion); they control either directly or indirectly a good third of the world's revenue and the top 200 of these companies monopolize a quarter of the world's economic activity. Nearly 33% of world trade now takes place among the subsidiaries of the same corporations, not between

6. Bertrand Badie, *La Fin des Territories* (Paris: Fayard, 1996).

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different corporations. These network corporations have immense resources at their disposal. The budget of General Motors ($132 billion) is greater than the GNP of Indonesia; Ford's ($100.3 billion), greater than the GNP of Turkey; Toyota's greater than the GNP of Portugal; Unilever's greater than the GNP of Pakistan; Nestlé's greater than the GNP of Egypt, etc.

These corporations, whose national origin is now merely a formal reference, have long since learned to replace minimal profitability objectives with objectives that maximize financial gain, whatever the social consequences. Less preoccupied with production than with market and patent control, they are above all financial groups that place most of their profits in currency or in by-products, instead of distributing the profits among shareholders or investing them in productive activities. Moreover, since they are wealthier than many nations, it is not difficult for them to purchase politicians and to corrupt government officials. To become more competitive, multinational corporations have also developed a new strategy. To avoid massive and brutal devaluations, as in the 1930s, they have been forced to seek other outlets for the surplus of floating capital, since production profits from classical investments are no longer sufficiently high. The struggle for market share has led them to include ill-qualified and poorly paid workers in the world labor force in order to better maximize profits.[7]

Where earlier Western nations were content to exploit the internal markets of Southern countries, multinational companies are now busy reexporting to Western markets products assembled or produced at low cost in the South. Globalization is taking place through the repatriation of a portion of the economic activity in Southern countries, through a global reorganization of the production cycle and the transformation of a local labor force into salaried workers. This phenomenon, called dislocation, has become generalized since the 1980s and is merely the extension-reorganization on a global scale of labor relations, another step toward the creation of a global labor market. It goes without saying that, from this viewpoint, the free movement of currency is essential in order to siphon off profits to decision-making centers — a process that has the double effect of reducing local accumulation and restricting purchasing power.[8]

7. Charles-Albert Michalet, *Le Capitalisme Mondial* (Paris: PUF, 1985).

8. "The liberalization of international transfers of capital," writes Samir Amin, "the adoption of floating exchanges, the high rate of interest, the deficit in the American balance of payment, the Third World's external debt, and privitization, constitute a perfectly rational policy that offers floating capital the outlet for speculation, thereby downplaying even the major danger of a massive devaluation of surplus capital." See "Les Vrais Enjeux de la Mondialisation," in *Politis-La Revue* (October-December 1996), p. 70.

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Simultaneously, from Asia and, to a lesser extent, from Latin America and the former Soviet empire, new players are beginning to emerge in global trade. In the past, gaps between wages in the North and the South reflected similar gaps in productivity and quality. The emergence of new industrialized nations and the sudden appearance of multinationals in some of the Southern nations have radically altered this situation. In 1995, the per capita income in Singapore had already surpassed that of France. This trend obviously will only continue to grow. The success of these newly industrialized nations in no way supports liberalism's claims. The "Asian miracle" is primarily a result of specific cultural characteristics, be it in Japan, China, Korea or Singapore.[9] It may also be explained in terms of the ingenuity of the industrial policies of these countries. Far from uncritically accepting the theory of the comparative advantages of specializing in low cost production forced on them, without worrying about actual demand, they have focused on the production of goods for which there is high world-wide demand. Of course, globalization changes competition among nations. As soon as businesses and funds can move freely in the world, the competitiveness of national businesses is no longer automatically linked to that of nations. The transnational space in which these large corporations operate no longer coincides with the optimal organization of national space. The position of a country in the world is only defined by the level of competitiveness its products have in the global market place — its businessmen being obliged to position themselves in this market according to the best benefit/risk or advantage/cost ratio. One might even say that nations are nothing more than points in the production space of large corporations. The very notion of comparative advantage is becoming obsolete.

Nations no longer have any choice but to fall back on policies of pure competition, to the detriment of social cohesion. That is precisely what happened in Europe beginning in the 1980s, first under the influence of Ronald Reagan's and Margaret Thatcher's liberal theories, then as a result of the Maastricht Treaty. This acceptance of globalization's demands has translated into generalized deregulation and liberalization, with priority given to foreign over domestic markets, the privatization of publicly- owned corporations, the opening to international investments, the fixing of wages and prices by the world market, the progressive elimination of aid and subsidies,

9. As Engelhard notes, "those peoples' cultural systems were the least brutalized by western modernity or, at least, they opened themselves up to it and did so with care, and with an eye on the best economic performances. Such is the case with Japan, but also with certain peoples of South-East Asia and China." See *Principes d'une Critique*, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

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and, lastly, the reduction of expenditures designed to slow competition — such as education, social welfare and the protection of the environment. One after another, European nations have adopted strictly monetarist policies (called competitive deflation) that amount to fighting inflation through high interest rates, the clearest result of which has been slow growth and increased unemployment. Taxed at a lower rate than wages, finance capital, meanwhile, contributes less and less to the general welfare.

At the same time, the debt crisis has forced Third World countries to make similar adjustments: the structural realignments the IMF and the World Bank have demanded have led most of these countries to use the same recipes as the industrialized nations — with even more catastrophic results. International organizations themselves have become instruments of globalization. The role of the IMF and the World Bank is to impose deregulation, to manage the fluctuation of money and to force Third World economies to submit to the absolute imperative of servicing the debt. The G7 is trying to coordinate the crisis management policies of large industrialized nations, without attacking the root problems. But a very particular role is reserved for the organizations overseeing world trade.

In the past, trade negotiations among nations dealt with a small number of national practices, such as import quotas, custom tariffs, control over the transfer of funds, etc. Today, the stakes of trade diplomacy go far beyond questions of borders. Negotiations now include institutions within countries: the structure of their banking system, the terms of their right to private property, their social legislation, their regulations concerning competition, concentration or industrial property. The underlying principle of these negotiations is that international trade will bind together nations with more or less the same institutions. In the attempt to reduce uncertainty and risk of direct foreign investment it encourages further uniform systems of property and regulations often consistent with American legislation. The negotiating power of multinational corporations is thus reinforced by a new lobbying power that allows them to demand special arrangements in matters of regulation, wages or taxes in order to increase profitability and competitiveness. In the final analysis, "through a growing number of local and international negotiations, societies are confronted with the demand to transform their domestic rules and institutions in order to conform to an externally-imposed model."[10]

The clauses of the GATT or of the WTO go far beyond the traditional

10. Suzanne Berte, "Le Rôle des Etats dans la Globalisation," in *Sciences Humaines* (September- October 1996), p. 55.

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objectives of fair-trade agreements. Their primary objective is to promote capital mobility. The agreements they reach are actually not so much fair-trade agreements as agreements for the free circulation of funds, with the intention to establish new international property rights for foreign investments and to create new limits to national and government regulations. As Ian Robinson has written, "the agreements on the free circulation of funds may be understood as instruments that, in the name of the reduction of obstacles to trade, alter or allow the renegotiation of laws, policies and practices that block the path toward a global market economy."[11]

Finally there is another novelty which facilitates understanding of the nature of cultural globalization: capitalism no longer sells just commodities and goods. It also sells signs, sounds, images, software, connections and links. It does not just fill up houses: it colonizes the imagination and dominates communication. In the 1960s, consumer society thrived on identifiable material goods, cars, household appliances, etc. The system that Benjamin R. Barber calls "McWorld" — like in Macintosh or McDonald — is a virtual world resulting from the intensification of all sorts of transnational transactions that converge to homogenize life-styles. "The props of the McWorld system," says Barber, "are no longer cars, but the Eurodisney amusement park, MTV, Hollywood films, software packages. In short, concepts and images as much as objects."[12]

This generalized commodification makes the consumption of advertising-spectacle the sole form of social integration, while at the same time intensifying feelings of exclusion and aggressive tendencies in those left out. Through a flood of universal images and sounds, it contributes to the standardization of lifestyles, to the reduction of differences and particularities, the conformity of attitudes and behaviors, the eradication of collective identities and traditional cultures. But more than this, it goes so far as to modify our perception of space and time. Under the network of stationary satellites, under the influence of economic empires that multiply alliances and mergers, under the effect of information highways that carry the same global sub-culture to the farthest reaches of the earth, the planet is shrinking. Dominated by fewer and fewer monopolies, which are more and more powerful, the space in which commodities, investments and currency circulate is being increasingly unified. Furthermore, while up until now all

11. "Mondalisation et Démocratie: un Point de Vue Nord-Américain," in *M* (March-April 1996), p. 16.

12. "Internet et Tchador, Même Combat," in *La Vie* (November 14, 1996), p. 58. See also Benjamin R. Barber, *Jihad versus McWorld* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1996).

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societies have lived time both as a succession of moments and subjective duration, this distinction is being erased. The technological revolution of "real time" accelerates the circulation of material and immaterial flux, with no possibility of a reference point or contextualization. This compression of time makes immediacy the only remaining horizon of meaning. As René Char put it, "Abolishing distance kills." The closeness that new communication technologies create ends up crushing things and confusing forms.

We are in fact witnessing a redefinition of reality. The Internet is a good example. While classic media are limited to showing what happens elsewhere, the Internet allows its users to virtually transport themselves to this elsewhere. The occupant of the McWorld system thus sees both everywhere and nowhere. The Internet inaugurates a new lifestyle that one could call electronic nomadism, but which is also an electronic colonialism. As Nelson Thall, Marshall McLuhan's successor at the University of Toronto, points out, "in the end, the power of the Internet is . . . that it allows the entire world to think and to write like North Americans."

Thus globalization should not be confused with simple internationalization, which was the system created and organized by nations to define international relations.[13] It is better defined as the shift from an international economy conceived as an aggregate of national and local economies that differ in the ways they function and are regulated, to a true planetary market economy governed by a system of uniform rules, in Karl Polanyi's sense.[14] It describes "the growing interdependence uniting all the components of space in order to lead them to an increasingly restrictive uniformity and integration."[15] Those at the controls are new extra-state and extra-national players, whose only ambition is to maximize their profits by planning the planetary organization of their activities, and eliminating all that can be an obstacle to their freedom of action. These new players strengthen their autonomy each day, and are therefore increasingly interdependent, to the point of constituting a single immense market organism.

Immiseration of the Masses

Once the exact nature of globalization is understood, it is easy to

13. Marcel Mauss already noted, 'the internationalism worthy of this name is the opposite of cosmopolitism. It does not deny the nation. It situates it. Inter-nation, this is the opposite of a-nation." See 'La Nation et l'Iinternationalism' (1920), in *Oeuvres*, Vol. 3, *op. cit.*, p. 630.

14. *The Great Transformation* (New York: Octagon Books, 1975 [1944]).

15. Bertrand Badie, "Mondialisation et Société Overte," in *Après-demain* (April-May, 1996), p. 9.

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understand the consequences. The first is a tragic increase of economic disparity. Hegel already said that rich societies are not rich enough to reduce the excessive misery they generate. Today, poverty no longer results from scarcity but from the poor distribution of wealth and from a psychological and cultural mind-set which cannot conceive of wealth other than in terms of work and production.

Between 1975 and 1985, the gross world product rose 40%; since 1950, world trade has increased eleven-fold; economic growth, five-fold. However, during the same period, there has been an unprecedented increase in poverty, unemployment, social disintegration and environmental destruction. The real GNP per person in the Southern hemisphere today is only 17% of that in its Northern counterpart. The industrial world, which represents only a quarter of humanity, possesses 85% of the world's wealth. The G7 nations constitute 11% of the world population but two thirds of the planet's GNP. New York City alone uses more electricity than all of sub-Saharan Africa. Between 1975 and 1995, American wealth increased by 60%, but this increase was monopolized by 1% of the population. One last revealing figure: the holdings of the 358 billionaires on the planet today is more than the cumulative annual revenue of the 2.3 billion poorest individuals, or the equivalent of nearly half of humanity. This means one thing: the more wealth, the more poverty — which refutes the liberal theory whereby the whole of society should end up benefiting from the profits of the wealthiest. In reality, because it gives a quasi-monopoly back to market forces, globalization contributes to the development of inequities and of social exclusion, thereby threatening social cohesion.

Similarly, colonialism continues by other means. Aid to the Third World perfected the technique of usury as a means of control. The WTO is now requiring Southern countries to treat foreign investors as if they were local by eliminating any legislative obstacles to work, the environment or health. Wherever liberal structural adjustments have been made, the results have been a worsening of the masses' living conditions and an increase in social instability. A logical consequence of all this is the flight of capital, which allows the measurement of the fundamentally parasitic character of globalization. As for countries that refuse to satisfy these demands, they are simply marginalized, ignored and finally expelled from international circuits. Obviously these consequences are not felt only in Southern countries. In the North, globalization translates into exacerbated transnational competition that, by means of exports and direct investments, is causing a leveling of wages and employment. All goods or services produced locally

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that could be produced elsewhere are vulnerable to the pressures exerted by capital to lower wages and benefits.

On the other side of the ledger, diminishing human capital and the progressive aging of the labor force have increased cost, thereby encouraging entrepreneurs to relocate their operations in countries whose labor force is the least expensive and the most flexible. Because the competitive production of developing countries is found especially in areas that require considerable unskilled labor, this labor force is encouraged and exploited in the South, and increasingly excluded from work in the North, contributing to the rise in structural unemployment. In the absence of an increasing number of commercial outlets, companies can only achieve the critical size they need to survive in global markets by taking market share from their competitors and by constantly improving their level of competition, which translates into a continuous movement of industrial restructuring and downsizing with devastating social consequences.

These dislocations are just beginning. In 1990, manufactured products exported by the newly industrialized countries of Southeast Asia to the developed countries still represented only 1.61% of the latter's GNP. In France, commercial exchanges with newly industrialized countries account for about 1% of the current unemployment rate. But this tendency is likely to grow. Between 1970 and 1990, the share emerging countries had in the stock exchanges of advanced countries went from .7% to 6.44%. At this rate, it could reach 55% in twenty years.

Whereas the industrial revolution allowed the integration of unskilled labor, globalization tends to systematically exclude those who do not have the right kind of know-how. From the viewpoint of the previous tendencies of capitalism, this represents a fundamental break that calls into question all social compromises adopted by the Keynesian welfare state. Globalization of wages and financial globalization combine to reverse the course of economic and social policies prevalent during the decades of post-war growth. During the thirty years following WWII, which correspond to the apogee of the Fordist system, capitalism had to come to terms with social demands formulated in industrial societies, as well as the determination of nations to create the foundations of an international economic order. The welfare state was the result of this historical compromise between capital and labor. It was a strategic adjustment of capital to meet a number of social demands. Globalization broke this social contract. Beginning in the 1970s, the economic logic of capitalism began to disconnect itself from social preoccupations, which led to the questioning

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of the hierarchy of wages and of mechanisms of social cohesion.

This disconnection of the economic and the social goes hand in hand with the loosening of the connection between the welfare state and the middle class around which the growth of preceding decades was built. Globalization is leading to the rise of an hourglass model of society in which the large majority of the occupants tend to fall towards the bottom, succumbing to a precarious existence, while money is polarized in the higher spheres, signaling the destructuration of the middle classes, i.e., of those classes "that capitalisms of the early 20th century not only generated but on which founded their growth."[16] During the thirty years following WWII, these middle classes became consolidated, leading to the integration of increasingly large portions of the population and thus to the relative reduction of inequities.

Today, this model of an irreversably expanding middle class is obsolete. The result is a profound transformation of class relations and interests within capitalist countries. In fact, the destructuration of the middle classes corresponds to a destructuration of the lower classes, which are seeing their traditional defense mechanisms obliterated. Unions are obviously unable to pressure multinational firms, used to playing on wage differences on the world market, as they did their traditional negotiating adversaries.

This change signals an astonishing regression — a return to situations of over-exploitation comparable to those the workers' movement faced at the dawn of industrial capitalism. Despite his faulty philosophy of history, Marx at least saw that the logic of the monopolization of capital leads to the reification of human relations. One can appreciate the irony of history. Precisely when the communist system collapses, Marx's theses are partly confirmed not only in the ruthless logic of profit but in the fact that unemployment and poverty are once again, as in the 19th century, becoming structural features of society, that social uncertainty and exclusion are growing each day, that the revenues of capital are increasing as the revenues for labor are decreasing, and that the guarantees won by the workers after decades of struggle are now all being questioned.

The Decline of the State

The last consequence of globalization is the nation-states' growing loss of power. In view of the increasing mobility of international capital, the globalization of markets, and the integration of economies, state

16. Pierre-Noel Giraud, *L'Inégalité du Monde. Économie du Monde Contemporain* (Paris: Galimard-Folio, 1996).

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governments are seeing their possibilities of macro-economic action diminish in the blink of an eye. In currency matters, their impact is already almost nil because the interest and exchange rates are now controlled by independent central banks that make their decisions according to markets. A country deciding on a unilateral decrease in its interest rates would immediately witness a flight of currency to countries offering the possibility of higher gains. At the same time, the range of monetary mobilization of the central banks has become less than the volume of transactions: in July 1993, in a single day of speculative attacks against the franc, the Bank of France lost all of its exchange reserves. In budgetary matters, states see their margin of freedom similarly reduced, owing to increased public debt that prevents any non-legislated stimulation. Finally, regarding industrial policy, governments have no solution to resist competition other than to attempt to attract foreign business through subsidies and special fiscal privileges, which leaves them at the mercy of the multinationals.

However, these firms are not satisfied merely to break through barriers: they also bend the legislative framework meant to regulate their operations. High wages and taxes or costly labor conditions make them leave. The result is that "any form of regulation may be a victim of the market's downward pressures simply because transnational companies see a cost."[17] The fiscal power of the states is then no longer sovereign but contractual, because it must be negotiated with an increasingly erratic capital in an ever better position to dictate its conditions. "No government, even in the North," explains Edward Goldsmith, "has control over multinational corporations any more. If a law disturbs their expansion, they threaten to leave and they can do so immediately. They are free to run all over the planet to choose the cheapest labor, the environment least protected by the law, the lowest taxes, and the most generous subsidies. There is no longer any need to identify themselves with a nation or to allow a sentimental attachment to hinder their projects. They are totally out of control."[18] In the end, concludes Adda, "financial globalization may be analyzed as a process of getting around the rules instituted by the most developed states through a multilateral system of world economic regulation."[19]

The globalized economy thus weighs so heavily on nation-states that they see their traditional means of action gradually relegated to modalities

17. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
18. "Seconde Jeunesse pour les Comptoirs Coloniaux," in *Le Monde Diplomatique* (April 1996).
19. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 94.

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of adherence. Confronted by a growing difficulty to control the rich, they find themselves deprived of an essential political lever: the coherent development of their territory. Since all budgetary efforts in the social realm means less ability to compete economically, they can no longer fulfill their historical role of managing social compromises. Politicians thus become powerless and the state changes its role. From a social mediator, it now merely manages territorial affairs beyond its control. Reduced to the role of spectator, it is like "a court clerk who notes decisions made elsewhere."[20]

Such a change is revolutionary in that it undermines one of the foundations of modern politics: national sovereignty. According to Badie: "globalization destroys sovereignties, cuts through territories, abuses established communities, challenges social contracts and renders obsolete earlier concepts of international security. . . . Thus sovereignty is no longer the undisputed fundamental value it was, while the idea of outside interference slowly but surely changes connotation."[21] As soon as the concept of sovereignty is challenged, however, the question of identity comes to the fore with all the social anonymity it brings along. Democratic principles are also threatened. There is a direct link between the loss of national sovereignty and the weakening of democracy. On the one hand globalization tends to generalize multiple loyalties to the detriment of civic allegiance. On the other, the ruling class' democratic legitimacy is called into question as soon as it no longer has the means to intervene between the demands of capital and social needs. Finally, the free circulation of currency also limits democratic control over economic and social policy because such policy is subject to external pressures the government can no longer ignore and because there is a transfer of decision-making power to worldwide unaccountable economic players. Citizenship thus becomes meaningless to the point where one wonders what "taking power" means any more.

The Dissolution of Modernism

Globalization is not what Ernst Jünger called the "universal state,"[22] constituted by the progressive fusion of the "red star" and the "white star,"

20. Ricardo Petrella, in *Le Monde Diplomatique* (May 1995). On the way in which globalization reduces the power of the nation-states, see also Kenishi Ohmae, *The Borderless World* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990); Vincent Cable, "The Diminishing Nation-State," in *Daedalus* (Spring 1995); Kenishi Ohmae, ed., *The Evolving Global Economy: Making Sense of the New World Order* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

21. "Mondialisation et Sociétée Overte," *op. cit.*, p. 9.

22. Jünger hinted that "the difference between the red and the white star is only the fluttering which accompanies the rising of a star on the horizon. Let it rise into the sky, and let unity be unveiled." See *L'Etat Universal* (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), p. 35.

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i.e., the East and the West. Globalization is the result of a modernization which takes the form of a structural adjustment seeking to integrate each society in the world market. It is a process which presents itself as a response to the crisis of modernity stemming from the Enlightenment.[23] But this response consists only in hypostatizing the market economy, in turning all capital into *finance* capital, and in increasing the power of technoscience. The general idea is that science will allow an understanding of everything; technical expertise, a resolution of everything; and the market, the purchase of everything. But that is not the way it is. Polanyi forecast that the market would destroy society. The time has arrived. The "soft trade" which, according to Adam Smith, was supposed to pacify human relations, transplants war to the heart of exchange. The dictatorship of the economic, the primacy of the private sector in the conduct of public affairs, leads to the dissolution of social ties. The universe of generalized deregulation leads to cultures of the lowest common denominator: the same consumerist model. "The eye with no prejudices," noted Jünger over thirty years ago, "is surprised by the growing vast conformity, which little by little extends to all countries — not only as a monopoly by one of the competitive powers, but as a global life-style."[24] "The contemporary shock of globalization is the consequence of a universalist liberalism which, despite appearances, loathes differences. Its implicit program is the homogenization of the world through the market and, consequently, the eradication of both nation-states and cultures. . . . The arrival of liberal society cannot bear cultural slag nor community membership. The maximalist liberal program seeks the eradication of differences, whatever their nature, because they create an obstacle to the big market and social peace. In fact, it is not only cultural residue which is too much, but the social fact itself. . . . Basically, the logic of Western modernity rests on the universal *a-cultural* character of all markets."[25]

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23. Gustave Massiah, "Quelles Reponses a la Mondialisation?" in *Après-demain* (April-May 1996), p. 6.

24. *Ibid.*, p.34.

25. Engelhard, *Principes d'une Critique*, *op. cit.*, pp. 199, 250 and 256. "In the same way that differences in wealth, talent or whatever, are ineliminable, it is necessary that individuals become absolutely the same . . . This occasionally unbearable lack of difference is latent in the neoclassic paradigm, which postulates the absolute separability of individual preferences. In other words, my things have to be independent and incomparable to those of my neighbor . . . This lack of difference, which culminates in the absolute separability of personal choices, is closely connected with the denial of culture. In effect, all cultural or communitarian belonging amounts to reducing personal preferences to being part of a group." *Ibid.*, pp. 251 and 256.

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But globalization is not universality either. In certain respects, it is even the opposite, because the only thing that it universalizes is the market, i.e., a mode of economic exchange that corresponds to a historical moment of a particular culture. In this regard globalization is only the imperialism of the Western market expanding to cover the entire planet — an imperialism internalized by the very people who are its victims. Globalization is the mass imitation of Western economic behavior. It amounts to turning the entire planet into this market religion, whose theologians and high priests operate as if the only goals were profitability.[26] It is not a universalism of *being* but of *having*. It is the abstract universalism of a splintered world, where individuals are defined only by their ability to produce and consume. Capitalism proposes to succeed where communism failed: to create a planet with no borders, inhabited by a "new man." But this new man is no longer the worker or the citizen but the "plugged in" consumer who shares the common destiny of an undifferentiated humanity connected only by the Internet or the supermarket.

"The Portuguese writer Miguel Rorga," Zaki Laïdi wrote, "once defined the universal as 'a place without walls.' By this, he meant that the values of universality could not be promoted and defended unless people already felt connected in a real, solid place. Globalization, however, develops an inverse dynamic. Individuals feel uprooted by globalization. Feeling powerless, they erect walls, even if fragile and laughable."[27] On the psychological level, individuals now feel dispossessed by overwhelming mechanisms, an increasingly fast pace and even heavier constraints — variables so numerous that they are no longer able to grasp where they stand. That this happens at a time when individuals are lonelier than ever, abandoned to themselves, when all great world-views have caved in, only intensifies this feeling of a nothingness. "Globalization," says Laïdi, "strangely reproduces the Freudian mechanism of the crowd in the grips of infection and panic: infection, to the extent that globalization engenders conformity and uniformity; panic because everyone feels alone, faced with mechanisms beyond their understanding." Accordingly, globalization resembles a puzzle of splintered images. It provides no vision of the world and it rules out any representation, while public powers, which declare it

26. On this, see Philippe Lancon, "L'Économie, comme Theologie de la Contrition," in *Liberation* (June 3, 1996), p. 5.

27. "Qu'est-ce que la Mondialisation?" in *Liberation* (July 1, 1996), p. 6. See also Zaki Laïdi, *Un Monde Prive de Sens* (Paris: Fayard, 1996); "Pour une Pedagogie de la Mondialisation," in *Après-demain* (April-May 1996).

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irreversible, are unable to deploy even symbolic resistance to it. "The depths of the problem of globalization result from interaction between a borderless world and one with no markers. . . . It is this dialectic between a world with no borders and a world with no markers that explains the crisis of meaning and that reinforces our perception of a disordered world."[28] This is reminiscent of what Peguy wrote in 1914, just before dying: "everyone is unhappy in the modern world."

The more globalization grows, the more societies try to reconstruct their particularity. But they have great difficulties doing so. Some invent identities from thin air. Others try to recreate an artificial internal dimension in a world where everything is becoming purely external. Fed by all types of frustrations, many undertake marginal projects which lead irreparably to irredentism and xenophobia. The result is what Benjamin R. Barber has dubbed "Jihad versus McWorld."[29] On the one hand, a planet on the road to uniformity, progressively homogenized by the market and by global communication; on the other, regrouped under the convenient title "Jihad," an ensemble of identity spasms, of aggressive ethnic or religious affirmations, which generate civil wars and tribal conflicts all over.[30] Such an outburst of convulsive identitarianism is understandable, because it is only the logical consequence of the transformation of the entire planet into an "open society": too much openness inevitably leads to too much closure. The reinvention of tribalism, clanism or ethnocentrism can thus be interpreted as a desperate reaction against a threat of dispossession.

Since through their excuses both reactions discredit each other, they cannot be sustained. It would be fairer to consider them, with Barber, as epiphenomena of globalization which mutually reinforce and justify each other. In so doing they turn their excesses outward and redirect them — in the same way that increasing inequality resulting from the constraints of a generalized economy pushes the poorest into extremism. Once the ethno-religious wars are over, however, the banner of McWorld returns even more forcefully. Moreover, in many respects, these two antagonistic forces

28. "Pour une Pedagogie de la Mondialisation," *op. cit.* p. 4.

29. *Jihad versus McWorld*, *op. cit.*

30. These are the convulsive reactions which led to Samuel Huntington's thesis, according to which the world is heading toward a cultural or civilizational war. See "The Clash of Civilizations?" in *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993); and *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). This thesis must be taken with a grain of salt, since culture determines the specificity of conflicts less than "the specificity of conflicts conditions the role of culture and the perception the actors have of it." See Panajotis Kondylis, in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, cited in *Courrier International* (October 10, 1996), p. 42.

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are two different forms — the soft and the hard — of one and the same totalitarian tendency. They both conspire to extinguish all forms of democracy and any active participation in public life. Finally, one can only be struck by the manner in which certain fundamentalist movements, be they the Talibans of Afghanistan or those involved in African ethnic conflicts, reject modern Western ideas in the name of their traditional values and at the same time open themselves to all sorts of Western technological and cultural products: listening to CNN, wearing jeans, drinking Coca-Cola.

Thus the extremes meet. As early as 1920, the Russian linguist Nicolas S. Trubetzkoi pointed out the paradoxical relation between cosmopolitanism and chauvinism. "One has only to consider chauvinism and cosmopolitanism," he wrote, "in order to realize that there is no radical difference between the two, that they are only two aspects of one and the same phenomenon."[31] Cosmopolitanism, he added, only denies national differences based on an idea of humanity derived from a specific model. It only invites civilized humanity to form a single entity by universalizing the model of a particular civilization, in this case Western civilization, implicitly considered the most complete "stage" of civilization. "Thus there is a parallelism between the chauvinist and the cosmopolitan. . . . The difference is simply that the chauvinist takes into consideration a smaller ethnic group than the cosmopolitan."[32] But both know only one thing: "What resembles us is best and better than what is different from us."[33]

A Political Response: Sovereign Europe

It is clear that the unchecked growth of financial capitalism is not the only outcome of today's crisis and that regulations are necessary at all levels to meet the challenges of globalization. First of all, financial markets can be regulated at the international level. Originally proposed by Tobin, taxing financial currency movements is already under way. A tax of .05% on world currency operations would discourage a number of short-term speculative operations and produce $150 billion per year — double the current amount of international aid. Thus, such a sum would allow the creation of a fund for social protection or for environmental defense. It is also possible to envision international organizations that would manage the world economy differently than existing ones, whose task would be to impose substantial redistribution of the profits of globalization for the

31. *L'Europe et l'Humanité* (Mardaga: Liege-Siprimont 1996), p. 47.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

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benefit of those most victimized by it. Engelhard proposes the creation of a world currency. The establishment of a planetary floating currency, the return to a stable international standard of value would obviously prevent speculation primarily feeding off differences of exchange.

All the same, if "the phenomenon of globalization is seen as the revenge of the economy over the social and the political,"[34] it is equally obvious that an economic response to globalization is not enough. Then the question is how to fill the gap between the incredible expansion of the world economy and the fact that there are no organizations able to deal with this phenomenon. If politics must control and regulate economics, it follows that a planetary economy must be confronted politically at the world level. In other words, as soon as the economy expands world-wide, should not politics do the same? Unfortunately, a world state is a pipe dream and it would create more problems than it would solve.[35]

Similarly, to oppose the nation-state to globalization would be a double error. First, because globalization spreads a process of homogenization to the entire planet, which in the past state bureaucracies have already achieved at the national level. Second, and more important, because the nation-state today operates at a level of intervention and decision which is completely paralyzed by the mere fact of globalization. Subject to external constraints exceeding its capacities, the nation-state is simply no longer able to take on global problems by itself. To believe that the nation-state can still decide about the opening or closing of its borders to financial fluxes, to believe that it is possible to reconstruct a cohesive society sheltered by walls which would isolate its inhabitants from the external world, is either a utopian dream or a lie.[36]

Political Europe and, more broadly, the regionalization of a number of large continental ensembles, could effectively confront globalization. Without being a panacea (because there is always the risk that, through direct investment, the countries concerned might be in competition inside their

34. Adda, *op. cit.*, *Oeuvres*, Vol. 1, p. 62.

35. See Danilo Zolo, *Cosmopolis. La Prospettiva del Governo Mondiale* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1995).

36. To resist globalization does not necessarily imply a reassertion of the territoriality typical of the nation-state. A large number of particularistic social dynamics are opposed to territoriality. One need only consider the example of Islamic fundamentalism, which challenges all grounding in particular nations. Similarly, identitarian, religious, ethnic, linguistic or cultural solidarities are transnational. From this viewpoint, threatened at the same time by globalization and the new forms of particularism, the nation-state appears more or less as an obsolete identitarian horizon. See Bertrand Badie, "Entre Mondalisation et Particularismes," in *Sciences Humaines* (May 1996), pp. 22-25.

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borders with foreign multinational corporations), European integration would allow the response to a sufficiently broad range of market needs, while constituting a pole of sufficient size to confront world financial fluxes. The European economic space is potentially the largest world market in terms of population and global buying power. A European political authority, controlling and coordinating monetary and budgetary policies, would make it easier to abandon the politics of external as opposed to internal growth, without abandoning social protection. Similarly, a single currency used advisedly could reduce the prerogative of the dollar and similarly become an element of power and of a regrounding of sovereignty.

But is it still necessary to strive for a truly sovereign Europe, where each stage of integration of national markets would be accompanied by a greater ability to make decisions and not simply constitute a market space of free exchange? Today this is hardly the case. European institutions can just as easily resist globalization as further it. For the moment, the acts of the European Community, which the member states impose upon themselves, are not predicated on true European sovereignty.[37] Finally, daily life remains local, which is the only place where politicians can still see the effects of their policies. Faced with the globalization of exchange and the universalization of signs — this tidal wave which erases all differences and values — what remains is the singularity of forms: languages, cultures and other social links patiently recreated from day to day. Engelhard writes of "the rehabilitation of politics passes, from one moment to the next, by a reconstruction of the social and of the cultural, and vice versa. But this is possible only as long as culture is not seen as static but as a creative tension, both a carrier of meaning and a process for deepening the art of living together."[38] Jean Baudrillard recently remarked that "all cultures worthy of this name lose themselves in the universal. All cultures which universalize themselves lose their singularity and die. It was so for those we have destroyed by assimilating by force, but it is the same for ours in its pretense to universality." He added: "all that matters today does so against the universal — against this abstract universality."[39]

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37. See Arlette-Doat, "Les Institutions Européennes: Pôle de Résistance ou Facteur d'Accélération?" in *Après-domain* (April-May, 1996), pp. 44-45.
38. Engelhard, *Principes d'une Critique*, *op. cit.*, p. 365.
39. "Le Mondial et l'Universel," in *Libération* (March 18, 1996), p. 7.

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Notes and Commentary:

The First Peoples and the Quebec Question

Wayne A. Hunt

Of the various attempts to come to terms with a changing world order, Samuel Huntington's recent work stands out, not least because it has prefigured a framework relevant to strategic decision-making.[1] He envisions a "clash of civilizations" in a multipolar world where nation-states are motivated by core civilizational values. On the microlevel, the clash is over territory and physical resources; on the macrolevel, it is about ideas or what has been called "soft" power.[2] According to Huntington, religion provides the pivotal distinction on which inter-civilizational conflict hinges. From this, secular distinctions follow, which offer fundamentally different accounts of the relation between individuals and the collectivity, citizens and the state, husbands and wives, parents and children, liberty and authority, rights and responsibilities, equality and hierarchy. Accordingly, the Western institutional configuration which made for constitutionalism, a rule of law, liberalism, free markets and a separation of church and state cannot be expected to take root in non-Western contexts.

1. Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

2. Joseph S. Nye, Jr.'s, *Bound to Lead, The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1990) pp. 193-195 "Soft" power refers to the ability of a hegemonic power to achieve outcomes in harmony with its basic values. This is accomplished through attraction rather than coercion. Nye's book is a critique of those who view America as declining. Today the US' ability to influence has never been greater, he claims, noting that this state of affairs came about as much through the force of imitation as the force of arms: a country astride popular channels of communication has more opportunities to get its message across and to affect the preferences of others than its rivals. Nye later refined the argument, asserting that "hard" power can be fused with "soft" power in order to act as a "force multiplier in American diplomacy." Space-based surveillance, direct broadcasting and high speed computer "system of systems" have given the US a "dominant battlespace knowledge" — as Operation Desert Storm demonstrated. The US' capacity for accurate, real-time, situational awareness of military field operations exceeds that of all other nations combined. See Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and William A. Owens, "America's Information Edge," in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (March-April, 1996) pp. 20-36.

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In this view, global politics can be divided into a number of core states surrounded by concentric circles of interests viewing each other as culturally kin. Listed in the Huntington scheme are a number of civilizations, including the Western one — with all its North American and European variants. A civilization, he enjoins, is an extended family and, like older members of a family, core states provide their relatives with both support and discipline. In the absence of kinship the ability to impose order is limited. Pakistan, Bangladesh or even Sri Lanka, Huntington argues, will not accept India as an "order-provider," just as no East Asian state will allow Japan to play the same role. No such entrenched rivalries, he assumes, will bedevil politics closer to home.[3]

Comparisons can also be made with Carl Schmitt's notion of *Grossraum*. Schmitt had an aversion to the managerialism of the technocratic-therapeutic state and was fearful of the unified world which might come together on this basis. Therefore he wrote a history of geopolitics to show how other ways of organizing society were possible.[4] These could be radically de-centered federations or loose confederations. Following Schmitt, Paul Piccone maintains that the smallest possible political units should be included in this category — "aggregations of neighborhoods, villages, cantons, the *polis* and other local units which historically have provided the only instances of real democracy thriving for any substantial length of time."[5] Smaller political units allow for direct democracy and a self-determination impossible in larger enterprises. The latter are necessarily mediated by increasingly unaccountable bureaucracies. Moreover, as a political-administrative elite becomes entrenched, an ever greater number of issues the political system deals with will be bureaucratically-driven.[6] The European Union provides a clear example of this tendency. Critics have a point when they charge that nations,

3. Huntington, *op. cit.*, p. 154. Thus he recommends a reconceptualization of NAFTA to include like-minded groupings. This is to be followed by a structural reconfiguration: NAFTA should be extended to include selected portions of the South Pacific. The new entity would be retitled NASP (as in North America-South Pacific). Such an arrangement would allow the US to embrace Canada, Australia and New Zealand — Western civilizations all. It would also "reconcile culture and economics and provide a solid and enduring identity for Australia, (one) that will not come from futile efforts to make Australia Asian." Huntington's use of this concept was said to be reminiscent both of the Chinese tributary system — in which the "Middle Kingdom" would be the present-day equivalent of the core state — and of *mandala*, derived from Hindu-Buddhist ideas of divine kingship expressed as a set of political relations between the core and the periphery. See, e.g., Wang Gungwu, "A Machiavelli for our Times," a review of Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations*, in *The National Interest* 46 (Winter 1996/97), p. 71.

4. See Wolfgang Palaver, "Schmitt on *Nomos* and Space," in *Telos* 106 (Winter 1996) pp. 110-112.

5. Paul Piccone, "Secession and Reform in Canada," in *Telos* 106 (Winter 1996), p. 44. The Swiss system, he argues, may turn out to be *the* political model for the 21th century.

6. For a further analysis, see Wayne A. Hunt, "Federalism with a Bureaucratic Face," in Patrick Robertson, ed., *Reshaping Europe in the Twenty-first Century* (London: Macmillan, 1992) pp. 35-44.

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aggregated, do not a super-nation make. When, in her celebrated September 1988 Bruges speech, Margaret Thatcher announced that Britain was not about to roll back the frontiers of the state in its own country only to see them re-imposed from Brussels, this is what she meant.[7]

The New Political Configuration

Deeper still is the dilemma of how societies can reorganize and restructure themselves in order to be open to market forces and yet retain democratic control over these forces. It is a moving balance and Canada is on the front line of the struggle. In Piccone's opinion, Canada may well provide a vision of the future to the rest of the world. Its route to development and then to possible disaster traces a trajectory which might be replicated elsewhere. This he attributes to "a displaced reaction to social engineering" in which the "main political agents are competing provincial and federal New Class elites" engaging in zero-sum jurisdictional bureaucratic disputes camouflaged as matters of national sovereignty.[8]

It is not that the Canadian government has ignored the world around it. In response to what has been termed "the underside of globalization" — the terrorism, environmental degradation, corruption and international crime that follows from the "new economy" — the Canadian government has called on the world community to advance the cause of what it calls "sustainable human security." Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister, Lloyd Axworthy, frankly acknowledged, however, that much of this remains hollow rhetoric. In a speech to the United Nations, Axworthy was so bold as to suggest that "far too many paper commitments" take the place "of real progress on the ground." In today's international arena, a "plethora of agendas, blueprints and plans" collide with "jurisdictional confusion and implementation overlap."[9] Add to this the problem of debt burden and the related public financing and the Minister could have been describing his own country.

Piccone points out that nation-building came late to Canada, but when it did

7. "It is ironic," Thatcher suggested, "that just when those countries, such as the Soviet Union, which have tried to run everything from the centre, are learning that success depends upon dispersing power and decisions away from the centre, some in the community want to move in the opposite direction." See Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993) pp. 744-745. At present, the European project is experiencing a number of difficulties which seem to confirm the wisdom of that statement. On one level, there are serious technical problems with what has often been described as "the path to a single currency." The famous convergence criteria for Monetary Union with regard to debt, budget deficits, interest rates and inflation comes at a high social cost. Is there a political will to continue on the present course? This is an important question which will tax — with "tax" being the carefully chosen word — the abilities of the present generation of decision-makers. On another level, there is a continuing and deep-seated systemic problem of public accountability, the "democratic deficit."

8. Paul Piccone, "Introduction," *Telos* 106 (Winter 1996) p.106.

9. Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, "Notes for an Address by the Honorable Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the 51st General Assembly of the UN, New York, September 24, 1996," Government of Canada, mimeo, pp. 4ff.

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the country pushed further and faster with the "dialectic of modernity." This dialectic has reached "its logical conclusion" in postmodernism, shown in the fact that the country "is now being forced to rethink radically its political configuration and make the kind of difficult political choices most other countries still have the luxury of postponing." According to his analysis, a direct link can be traced between a coercive state apparatus and political movements conventionally viewed as aberrations or even pathologies. The Reform Party is often depicted in the latter terms. As Piccone contends, however, this group raises redistributional problems which, though important, are resolvable at an administrative level, by undoing much of the unnecessary nation-building undertaken during the past half century. Of more lasting import is the problem of the political expression of ethno-nationalism. This, Piccone insists, challenges "the very nature of *modernist* politics and its technocratic managerial ideology." But as he notes, the ethno-nationalists take on the posture and eventually the ideology of those they hope to displace, thereby re-centralizing authority in their own jurisdiction as they attempt to re-create a statist view of the world in their own image. Quebec's notorious language laws stand as less than mute witness to this tendency.

At present, politics in North America are pulled in opposing directions. In sociological terminology, there is an axial conflict between system and lifeworld. On the one side are the agents of a hegemonic New Class ideology. These are the people Robert Reich calls "symbolic analysts" — that one-fifth of America's working population who, in his account, trade in high concepts. These are also the information economy's success stories. Strategic thinkers all, they have been able to work the division between the "knowers" and the "know-nots" to their own career gain. As "deal structurers," they can order data with the same fluidity with which they reorder the corporate lives of those more vulnerably located in the company hierarchy. They make performance-based pay a mantra of the "eat what you kill" routine of the world they inhabit. A growing chasm separates them from those who make a living in routine production services.[10]

In the US, the "reinvention of government" has been taken up with the same ideological mission as the Thatcherite project of creating "internal markets" for public services was in the United Kingdom. In these and other instances, the result is the same. Statistically significant activities take precedence over all others. The final product is either directed toward "customers" — with the market orientation this term presupposes — or toward "clients" — with a professional relation implied. Scant mention is made of "citizens" and all the civic engagement with which they have been long and honorably associated. Those who make a stand on the other side of the struggle against New Class domination do so in this critically important sense. But it is more important to understand the wider context of these activities. The current obsession with representative democracy

10. Robert Reich, *The Work of Nations: Preparing Ourselves for 21st Century Capitalism* (New York: Knopf, 1991), pp. 294-295.

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has to be seen against the backdrop of the modernist heritage of these institutions. As that heritage falls apart, so too will the structural mechanisms which have been tied to that tradition. If the present system is fitted to modernity, what sort of system will fit postmodernity? To answer that question it is necessary to examine structures now apparent only in outline. The motive energy behind these emergent structures is provided by what Piccone calls "postmodern populism."

Representative democracy, Piccone argues, has collapsed into liberal democracy. In this latter situation, "a growing array of rights and entitlements (presumably meant to protect individuals against the state) end up restricting real democratic choices to trivialities." Furthermore, they transform "the original democratic framework into a new technocratic system of social domination legitimated by a legality predicated on safeguarding the universality of rights and entitlements." Piccone follows Carl Schmitt in maintaining that this results in a closure of democratic prerogatives.[11] The capitalist system has been faulted for this. But the nation-state also plays a critical role by placing a homogenous "public sphere" over a more informal network of face-to-face relations which have spontaneously evolved on a communal basis. In imposing an abstract and formal matrix of rules, the New Class has contributed not insignificantly to the undermining of a broadly-based civic culture. The complexity and technical nature of its rule-based domination enhances the "professional" stature of the New Class while it diminishes the democratic activism of those who fall within its purview, reducing the latter to a passive, clientelized status. Dependency on the state inevitably follows that condition, as does a bloated expansion of the state's regulatory activities.[12]

Geopolitical change, however, has contributed to a change of consciousness. The end of the Cold War, Piccone intuits, did not mean an end of history so much as an "end of the logic of modernity," meaning the end to a unilinear sense of "progress" as much as an end to the imperialistic assumption that the ideals of the Enlightenment are "universal." In response to this, the postmodern populist is identified by his ability still to operate within tradition and thus able to cut through "the alienated modes of interest representation (deemed one-sided, inadequate and tendentially corrupt) to articulate needs and desires he experiences in his everyday life." Elsewhere, Piccone adds that the organic communities which nurture this activity are forced to learn from their own mistakes and accept the consequences of their actions.[13] Furthermore, postmodern communities have evolved to a point where "ethnicity and territoriality are no longer inextricably connected."[14]

11. Paul Piccone, "Postmodern Populism," in *Telos* 103 (Spring 1995), p. 75.

12. Alvin W. Gouldner, *The Dialectic of Ideology and Technology: The Origins, Grammar and Future of Ideology* (New York: Seabury, 1976), p. 76.

13. Piccone, "Postmodern Populism," *op. cit.*, pp. 49-53, 81.

14. Piccone, "Postmodern Populism," *op. cit.*, pp. 21ff. For an extended treatment of this theme and the development of a future scenario based on these projections, see David Elkins, *Beyond Sovereignty: Territory and Political Economy in the Twenty-First Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

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The Quebec Paradox

A case study which puts this final proposition to the test can be found in northern Quebec. The indigenous peoples of the land bounded by the waters of the James, Hudson and Ungava Bays — the Cree, the Inuit, the Naskapi and the Innu — have struggled in recent years to prevent the destruction of their native habitat by the Great Whale Hydrodevelopment Project. The native peoples took their case to the courts both as a matter of domestic as well as international law. They also appealed to the United Nations and, as a symbolic gesture, to the British Crown — since their original treaty rights were negotiated directly with the representatives of the Crown. Their ultimate court of appeal, however, was the "court of public opinion." In addressing their appeal the natives proved to be adept at public relations and skilled managers of the media. While their adversaries resorted to the abstract reasoning of dry "black letter" law, the natives put forward their position in a more nuanced and indirect manner. They told simple stories about ancestral customs, which evolved as part of a way of life crafted around the rhythms of the seasons from — in a favored phrase — "time immemorial." "The voice of the land is in our language" was a maxim invoked on many occasions in similar disputes in other parts of North America.

Cree and Inuit leaders brought international publicity to their cause by paddling an *odeyak* — a combination canoe and kayak — from Montreal to New York City. Their cause was taken up on Earth Day in 1990 by Robert Kennedy, Jr. Eventually, Hydro Quebec's contract with New York state was cancelled. A documentary film, which chronicled the events and appropriately entitled *Power*, was released in the autumn of 1996. The first peoples had an effective spokesperson in Matthew Coon Come, Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees. Coon Come was able to focus the energies of a disparate group of aboriginals and those in sympathy with them by singling out a villain of the piece: the government of Quebec. He charged that "the position of the secessionist government of Quebec has now moved from policies of ethnic nationalism to those of racial discrimination." Support for this came from a formal presentation which the Quebec government had made in the case of *Cote, Decontie et al. v The Queen*. This case had come before the Supreme Court of Canada in June 1996. It involved a group of aboriginal hunters charged with a breach of Quebec wildlife permits, but the implications were more far reaching. The Quebec government invoked the doctrine of *terra nullius* — presenting the land as without ownership before the Europeans' arrival It also urged the federal court to declare that Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, which protected aboriginal rights, did not apply in this case.[15]

15. Within Quebec, the aforementioned Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms it contains is a potent political symbol. Quebec nationalists point to its unanimous rejection by the Quebec National Assembly to substantiate their claim that it was "imposed" on Quebec. Conveniently omitted is the fact that francophones from Quebec occupied high public offices in the federal cabinet and the federal public service at the time. Similarly, the prime minister himself, Pierre Trudeau, was a francophone.

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The aboriginal side used the landmark decision in Australia of *Mabo v Queensland* (1992) 175 C.L.R. (H.C.), which states that "whatever the justification advanced in earlier days for refusing to recognize the rights and interests in land of the indigenous inhabitants of settled colonies, an unjust and discriminatory doctrine of that kind can no longer be accepted." In attempting to argue that this case was a matter of French civil law, rather than of international jurisprudence or British internal law, the Quebec government ceded moral advantage to its opponents, who effectively argued that human rights know no such artificial distinctions. This allowed Coon Come to assert that Quebec's present government was as "colonizing as at any time in North American history." Furthermore, it was "seeking to place itself in dominant role *vis-à-vis* aboriginal peoples in Quebec by denying the existence of our most fundamental constitutional rights."[16]

Special opprobrium was reserved for the Quebec Premier, Lucien Bouchard, whom the Grand Chief accused of a "blatant double standard." The Premier had declared that the right to self-determination belonged to the Quebec people as a whole, but not to the first peoples. A week before the province-wide referendum was held in October 1995, the Cree held their own referendum in which 96% voted "No" in response to the Quebec government's proposal. Comparable referenda, with comparable results, were held by the Innu or Montagnais in five of their communities. As Coon Come put it, it was not that the federal government had treated natives well, but only that the record of Quebec's provincial government was worse. The native leaders had been cojoled to sign a treaty, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement of 1975, which promised compensation to his people but, as with many such accords, it was honored more in the breach. There was a long history to this. In the last three hundred years his people and their territory had been passed from king to king and from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The latest federal/provincial struggle in Canada instanced another episode in a continuing saga, which used the first peoples as pawns in a larger power struggle. As with other oppressed peoples, Coon Come recognized that the wider community had to be alerted about their plight. With this purpose in mind, he had the Secretariat of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador endorse a resolution indicating "the discriminatory positions of the Quebec government."[17]

Although his classification made no provision for it, what was at stake was a "clash of civilizations" in Huntington's sense — but one *inside* the West rather than on its borders.[18] The aboriginals, in formal court settings as well as in the

16. Matthew Coon Come, "Remarks of Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come," Canada Seminar, Harvard Center for International Affairs and Kennedy School of Government (October 28, 1996), mimeo, p. 7.

17. Secretariat of the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador, Resolution No. 11, 1996.

18. Huntington has been criticized for presenting Western civilization as more monolithic than it is and thereby ignoring important internal dynamics. See James Kurth, "The *Real* Clash," in *The National Interest* 27 (Fall 1994), pp.3-15.

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informal "court of public opinion," told stories which emphasized the point that theirs was a less exclusivist notion of the land. For natives, the relation with their environment was in the past, and continues to be in the present, other-worldly and long term — they see themselves as stewards of the land from generation-to-generation. For those on the other side, a more worldly and short term view prevails in which natural resources are viewed instrumentally, as utilitarian assets to be expropriated for the use of those with legal title to them. The contradictions between these two world-views framed the controversy over Quebec Hydro's, and in a larger sense, the government of Quebec's, actions. Similar disputes were also taking place in Ontario.[19]

The first peoples have sponsored their own form of postmodern populism in which their demands for self-government, or what a Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, reporting in 1996, called a "third order of government." It is a government, however, that builds from the ground up, with a distinct set of native institutions to deal with community education through "learning circles," community health care provision through "healing circles," community justice through "sentencing circles." It is oriented to "low politics," to the provision of local services at a local level. They have deployed their own version of the European Union's principle of subsidiarity — a principle the Europeans themselves are not likely to apply down to the local level.

The Quebec government's quest for greater independence is, by contrast, driven by "high politics." Like France, with its Islamic minorities, the government of Quebec aspires to be a "melting pot" which assimilates minorities into a larger francophone culture. Despite official denials and party resolutions passed in the aftermath of then Premier Jacques Parizeau's claim that "money and the ethnic vote" took victory away from his separatist party, the suspicion remained in many quarters that this remark reflected true nationalist feelings. Francophones reputedly distrusted those who were not of the old stock — not *pure laine,* in their words. Although the first peoples received most attention beyond Canada's borders, other ethnic communities also voted in large numbers against the nationalist project. Combined pressure from these groups showed how ethnicity and territory had been woven together by Quebec nationalists in pursuit of the separatist cause. As such, it was not realistic to deny the claims of state-building to others while claiming it for themselves. The question which in previous debates had not been asked, i.e., "If Canada is divisible, why is Quebec indivisible?"[20] was finally raised.

19. See Wesley Cragg and Mark Schwartz, "Sustainability and Historical Injustice: Lessons from the Moose River Basin," in *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. 31, No, 1 (Spring 1996). They emphasize that, from the native perspective, "the land is something deserving great respect, a source of cultural, aesthetic and spiritual as well as economic well-being." Thus the "land is seen as of great value in its own right. Its health is directly linked to the well-being of Native peoples," p. 70.

20. This was a paradox emphasized by outsiders. See Charles F. Doran, "Will Canada Unravel?" in *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 75, No. 5 (September/October 1996), p. 104.

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In a more fundamental sense, these events showed the limitations of Enlightenment claims and New Class methods used to enforce those claims. Those who have criticized the Enlightenment and the forms of governance it entails have tended to look to the Asia-Pacific Rim. John Gray's recent works offer one such example in his account of the economic initiatives taken by the non-Western cultures of East Asia.[21] Despite the fact that their comparative advantage in labor costs will lessen as their societies modernize, along with Huntington he clearly sees them, and the region they represent, as a pivotal force in the future. Where Gray parts company from Huntington is in exploring the philosophical base of these changes. Gray takes philosophy to task for its parochial fascination with the Western model, for its formalism, for its arrogant pretension to universality. A major target is John Rawls or, more precisely, the deep-seated influence of a Rawlsian-inspired philosophy procedurally based on a set of rules that aspire to be set for all time and all places.[22] Gray attacks this project for "priding itself in remaining on the surface" and in so doing, equating "the moral point of view with that of impartiality." Consequently, there is a denial of "moral standing to personal projects and attachments, except in so far as they are compatible with impersonal standards of justice." Later, Gray argues that for all societies the task will be to find or to recover "a form of rootedness which is sheltered from overthrow by technologies and market forces which, in achieving a global reach that is disembodied from any community or culture, cannot avoid desolating the earth's human settlements and its non-human environment." To re-imagine alternative possibilities, the author proposes another "mode of thinking."[23]

The hope that emerging forms of cultural expression could raise awareness of the conditions of marginalized peoples is taken up by Avishai Margalit, who seeks to accomplish this by telling a "story about the decent society — a story whose heroes are concepts." His is not, he submits, an allegory done in the medieval style in which these concepts were made flesh and sent to walk the world. Instead, he takes a simple idea, that of humiliation, and restores an older meaning to the term which meant rejection from the Family of Man. In a limited but subtle way, Margalit offers a critique of the Rawlsian notion of a "just society," showing that a society may extend the formal privileges of the law to a people but still

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21. See John Gray, *Enlightenment Wake: Politics and Culture at the Close of the Modern Age* (New York: Routledge, 1995)

22. Later in his career, Rawls has shown more concern with international questions. Under the caveat of ideal conditions, he hopes to make his principles acceptable both in liberal democratic societies and those societies which he called "hierarchical." See John Rawls, "The Law of Peoples" in Stephen Shute and Susan Hurley, eds., *On Human Rights, The Oxford Amnesty Lectures 1993* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), pp. 42-82. Numerous critiques have since appeared. See Thomas Pogge, "An Egalitarian Law of Peoples," in *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Summer 1994), pp. 195-224. They show the limitations of what Gray has called "Kantianism in one country."

23. John Gray, *Enlightenment's Wake, op. cit*, pp. 3-4, 181-184.

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not treat them in a decent way.[24] Within such a framework, the indigenous peoples of northern Canada have already shown how development can move on a different trajectory — one opposed to a large technocratic state and predicated on a small and human scale of life.

24. Avishai Margalit, *The Decent Society*, tr. by Naomi Goldblum (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996) p. 289. The letter of the law may differ from the spirit. Margalit cites the case of the *Gastarbeiter* in Germany. Germany grants all manner of pension rights and citizen entitlements to these people, while at the same time refusing to acknowledge their full citizenship. Margalit also draws attention to the heroic efforts that have gone into the building of each Israeli *kibbutz* and contrasts that with the different treatment given to those who are non-members of these organizations. The same lesson can apply to the treatment of the first peoples. It can also apply to the way Native communities treat non-members, such as the mixed ancestry Metis.

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*Reason and Unreason in Today's French Historical Research**

Sonia Combe

One of the first archivists to call for an open debate concerning access to contemporary archives asked: "What would become of a democracy which stops questioning its institutions?"[1] Usually, in open societies anything can be said as long as a place can be found to say it. Having found such a place, intellectuals should be able to exercise their critical vocation: to remain aware in the face of those vested interests which, by manipulating consensus, threaten intellectual autonomy. I preface my account of the reception of my book concerning "forbidden archives" in France in this fashion because the book did not follow the historians' "professional" rules. As a result, it met its proper fate. Despite efforts by commentators able to stand apart from the "consensus of an academic orthodoxy predicated on the complicity of its participants,"[2] *Archives Interdites* did not generate discussion but aroused vehement attacks. It exposed questionable intellectual practices, thus providing an opportunity to examine the way institutions authorizing and legitimating them function and, more important, the contemporary French historians' social role and their political responsibility.

Although they are the main users of the "nation's memory," historians have not paid much attention to the question of access to contemporary French archives. The situation was to have improved with the adoption of the 1979 law providing access to French archives. Historians do not hesitate to describe in the strongest possible terms the obstacles they encountered before that law was passed. Should they be reminded of how they previously accepted this state of affairs without a whisper? This acquiescence can be attributed to the traditions of a discipline in which works that "rub the wrong way" are very rare and "conformist thinking" is the rule.[3]

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* This is an edited version of "Raison et Déraison en Histoire Contemporaine," originally published in *Lignes*, No. 29 (October 1996), pp. 125-156. Translated by John Shepley. It is a chronological reconstruction of the reception of Sonia Combe's book, *Archives Interdites: Les Peurs Françaises Face à l'Histoire Contemporaine* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994).

1. Philippe Grand, "Transparence des Archives. Le Débat Reste Ouvert," in *Lignes*, No. 23 (October 1994), p. 127-137.

2. Pierre Bourdieu, *Raisons Pratiques. Sur la Théorie de l'Action* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1994), p. 11.

3. See Guy Thuillier and Jean Tulard, *Le Métier d'Historien* (Paris: PUF, 1991) p. 35.

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How is it possible for young historians, or any scholar dependent on the "castrating" institution, to enjoy impunity and intellectual autonomy? The publication of *Archives Interdites* warned that things can no longer remain as they are. New legislation concerning access to archives is presently being drafted and, in March 1996, the Association of French Archivists sponsored a conference on the subject. The conclusions of that meeting support the main thesis of *Archives Interdites* — something journalists neglected to mention.[4] By implying that the institution could reform itself unaided, these journalists have occluded the fact that the publication of criticism of the institution, at the risk of offending the powers that be, can make a difference. That the press went along with academic censorship of the book triggering this debate is a typical example of disinformation.

Several other examples have come to my attention since the book's appearance. Of course, those implicated do not represent the whole historians' community, but only those historians dealing with recent events — those who often deal with Vichy and hold important institutional positions. They behaved like a High Command, preferring vulgar *ad hominem* invectives to discussion, to the point that several historians have felt compelled to dissociate themselves from all that and write me letters of support. The fact that some of those who apologized for not intervening in public requested anonymity is disturbing. In any case, it points to the inner workings of powerful networks within the historians' guild, and to the particular connection to the predicament of historians dealing with recent events. In this they differ from their colleagues dealing with earlier periods, whose work has no immediate social and political implications.

Historians, Archivists and Contemporary French History

In the introduction to my book, I stated that nothing, or almost nothing, had predisposed me to write on such a theme. My previous work was not on France but on Eastern Europe, and never before have I had to consult French archives. Since I work in a library (specializing in 20th century history), I saw difficulties in gaining access to contemporary archives only as a matter of poor working conditions (lack of staff to handle and classify the holdings). It is often outsiders who raise the embarrassing questions, since they still have the ability to be astonished. Unwittingly, I put my finger on practices that were no secret to any insider. Having started out to show that there was an abuse of power in the way the state administered its archives, I discovered that these practices (restricted access, withholding and even concealing "sensitive" files, such as, e.g., the lists of Jews from the Vichy years) were confirmed by the state's behavior. In their legitimate desire to examine some documents, whose value grows in proportion to the time spent looking for them, historians asking favors from the administration were subjected to a policy verging on illegality in the sense that the granting of special privileges, in an open society, often signals abuses of power.

4. See *Le Monde* (April 5, 1996) and *Libération* (April 3, 1996).

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What usually happened was the opposite of what one would normally expect: instead of being upset that access to archives was so difficult to gain, historians eventually felt grateful to this institution that had made its holdings so valuable. Having gained this privilege, historians now had the satisfaction of being in on the secret, real or fancied. The archivist's discretionary power, whose legitimacy rested simply on questionable precedents, had come to appear altogether natural. It gave rise to a situation in which one profited by the archive administration's flaunting of the law. For historians, access to the archive became a kind of capital. Even if they did not get everything, they at least had the satisfaction of being in a much better position than their other colleagues. But a favor must always be repaid. By assuring the administration of their discretion, historians did gain access to certain sensitive documents but lost their independence. They could not say everything. Knowing whether or not this "everything" is decisive does not alter the question of principle involved. Bound by their commitments, the historians found themselves in an objective situation of dependence *vis-à-vis* the state and threatened by self-censorship. Whether they did it consciously to preserve and extend their privileges or unconsciously (moved by gratitude for the way they had been granted access to the archive), or else by internalizing regulations whose purpose is to protect people from embarrassment (often *post mortem*, involving officials whose acts are more important than their names) changes nothing.

Such a situation was all too reminiscent of the predicament of official historians in the Communist countries of Eastern Europe, where the state had the monopoly on historical truth.[5] Paradoxically, those whose practices I questioned, archivists and historians, reacted in opposite ways, as though their roles had been reversed. Once they recovered from their shock at finding themselves in the spotlight, some archivists accused of wielding powers they allegedly did not have began their soul-searching through a committee called "Private Life"— what eighteen months later led to the previously mentioned conference. I had indeed pointed to the excessive power of the state over "its" archives through an abusive interpretation of "privacy": pretending to respect privacy, to which every citizen is entitled, it systematically denied access to public documents detailing the activity of officials (during Vichy, but not exclusively, since men in the military enjoy the same protection, as can be seen by how hard it is to consult WWII military archives, not to mention those dealing with the Algerian war).

5. Contrary to what may have been said and written, I never called French historians "official historians." I drew a comparison between accepted practices in open societies and those prevailing in closed ones, and spoke of "reasonable historians" — reasonable because respectful of the reasons of state in relation to which not everything can be said. "Reasonable historians" can occasionally be "unreasonable," which they generally are within reasonable limits. Official historians enjoyed no such freedom. Otherwise, they sacrificed their careers and were banished by their guild — sometimes even by society. Their failure to see the difference between official and "reasonable" historians allowed all historians to stick together and avoid confronting the questions raised by *Archives Interdites*.

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The new director of the Archives de France asked the ministry responsible for its activities to set up a commission, which was chaired by the state councillor Guy Braibant. Yet, following precedent, the archives' administration refrained from speaking publicly. Only the president of the French Archivists Association explained that I had picked the wrong target, since archivists merely carry out orders.[6] Apparently, I had minimized the responsibility of the administrations in withholding files. Two archivists, however, came out in favor of opening the archives a few months after my book's appearance.[7]

While archivists were generally flexible, historians dealing with recent history stubbornly denied the premises of the debate. They denounced what they called the myth of the closed archives even when archivists and the administration of the archives took this "myth" seriously. When they responded in defense of the archivists, these historians ignored the second part of my book, devoted to the repercussions of the policy on the writing of contemporary history — something which concerned them directly. No one took issue with this specific point, as well as the "blank pages" I attributed to lack of access to the archives, or those books that have become "reference works" by default because they are the only ones available by virtue of their authors' privileged access to holdings inaccessible to others.[8]

Oddly enough, I met sympathetic historians who had been able to work in archives without undue difficulty (because of different accessibility depending on the department or ministry), while others, who for various reasons never used public archives, were vehemently against *Archives Interdites.* The book apparently disturbed the institution that was hushing things up: not so much the Archives de France, which on the whole reacted positively, but the *establishment* in history "of the present." Apparently, the controversial portion of the book was that dealing with the question of archives only insofar as it illustrated practices I had glimpsed. Through the reception of *Archives Interdites,* a pattern became discernible based on the spontaneous ideological collaboration of historians with the state — indulgent and spontaneous, but by no means gratuitous because, a source of symbolic and/or real power, this collaboration was relevant for the writing of history.

Supporters and Detractors of Archives Interdites

Caught in the inner logic of their research and immersed in the subject, authors often lack the perspective to measure the impact of their work. When, shortly after my book's publication, I received a letter from a professor praising my "intellectual courage," I smiled. I did not deserve all that. I had, however, had a

6. See *Le Monde* (December 23, 1994).
7. See *Le Monde* (May 27, 1995).
8. Similarly, no one mentioned the example I provided concerning the lack of reference to the women's camp at Rieucros in *Les Années de Guerre en Lozère* (published by a cultural division of the regional archives and intended for high-school students) whose author had justified the "oversight" because she did not have access to camp records.

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taste of the reactions that *Archives Interdites* would trigger from reading Rousso's and Conan's work.[9] Their book was published two months before mine and, in discussing the accessibility of French archives, they referred to articles I had written earlier for the newspaper *Libération.* Not only did their work look like a hasty and disorganized anticipation of my own (I had made no secret of these views in the two years I had been developing them), but their poorly argued defense of the existing system (which admitted only a few dysfunctions corroborating my thesis) gave the impression that the authors were "under orders" to attribute to the director general of the Archives de France the initiative for the 1979 legislation concerning archives when, following the adoption of the 1966 Freedom of Information Act in the US, all eleven European countries had reconsidered their laws. More importantly, the authors' statement that the period of the Occupation had not been an issue during discussions concerning the adoption of the law only confirmed the slipshod nature of their research.[10] I found the opposite: the question of the Vichy government archives, and even more the files on the postwar elimination of collaborators, had constantly cropped up during parliamentary debates.

I received many letters after the publication of *Archives Interdites.* I have gone over about eighty of them, a little more than a third of which are from academics, the other two thirds from independent historians (regional historians, former members of the resistance), as well as private citizens who had run into difficulty in gaining access to the archives in the course of family investigations. As for the reactions of academic circles, this correspondence indicated that *Archives Interdites* had been received differently in various fields of scholarship. Sociologists, political scientists, and philosophers welcomed it, while historians were divided.[11]

Thus, since the book's publication I have collected even more conclusive examples than the ones I provided in my book. The historian Pierre Miquel informed me that he had finally received a reply to his application for special permission to see documents on the Algerian war — six months after the publication of his book. An American scholar sent me a letter from an archivist denying her

9. Henry Rousso and Eric Conan, *Vichy, un Passé qui ne Passe pas* (Paris: Fayard, 1994).

10. *Ibid.*, p. 93. The Occupation "was never in question during the discussions which were to lead to the equilibrium between the right of access to information and respect for privacy and certain state secrets."

11. Claude Lévy, a former member of the "Comité d'Histoire de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale," reminded me of the fine work done by his committee — work I had acknowledged before pointing out its sudden stop and its subsequent silences. He was shocked by the reevaluation of the work of a committee to which he had dedicated his career. Nevertheless, a number of historians wrote to tell me how salutary it was that the question of access to archives had finally been raised, or to inform me of their own unhappy experiences. Many people wrote to request help. That I became a "complaint department" (more than a year after the book's publication, I am still asked questions, sometimes even on the advice of archivists) for having written something that provided no recipes but analyzed the workings of an institution, shows the absence of any recourse against the administration's absolute power.

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request to examine porcelain objects produced under the Occupation by the Manufacture de Sèvres, "since these objects [might] cause embarrassment for artists still living who would not wish their role during this period to be made public." Above all there were letters from people whose family history had been "stolen" and was being restored on the basis of wounds whose origin they wanted to know. One woman did not understand why she should not be allowed to look up the proceedings of the trial in which her grandfather had been sentenced in the course of a political and financial scandal under the Third Republic. The documents could not be produced (this was the crowning touch) out of "respect for the privacy" of the grandfather, who clearly had been the victim of a judicial error, since the Fourth Republic had discreetly rehabilitated him.

There were Spanish and Russian immigrants, Rumanian and Polish Jews, who had been denied access to the naturalization files of their parents. There was a woman whose parents, militant communists, had been denounced under the Occupation and had never come home. There was a farmer from central France whose father, who had fought at Verdun, had been guillotined for saying, one Sunday in November 1942 while coming out of a bistro after mass, "Pétain is a bastard." The son had not been allowed to see Pétain's rejection of clemency preserved in the regional archives. The list of the state's abuse of the citizens' right to know their personal history goes on and on. Of course, the subject of Vichy constantly came up in these letters, which I read with a feeling of impotence.

What emerges from all of these denied requests for archives is a profound loss of confidence in institutions, compounded by the experts' arrogance. "Historians," one of these correspondents wrote me, "write history according to the political objectives of successive governments." Or, as another one put it: "Vichy is our history, and not just a subject for historians." What this correspondence also shows is that access to contemporary archives is not a marginal demand. It represents the aspirations of a large portion of society — larger than I myself had initially suspected. Clearly, it is no longer merely a matter to be left to specialists.

Historians "of the present" see things differently. They claim that nothing would be gained by opening the archives and that, on the contrary, the Archive authorities, irritated by all the fuss, would only set up further roadblocks.[12] Allegedly, it would be better to negotiate quietly with the various ministries or the administrators of the Archives. This is not simply a difference in tactics. This attitude reflects a political culture. Such prudence is part and parcel of the advantages of the special permission system, first on the symbolic level (recognition of the scholar as standing above the crowd), and later on the material level (when one is granted first or exclusive access to classified material). This position, shared by scholars without a personal stake in the matter, betrayed the serious demobilization of historians as political subjects: they resorted to strategies based on patronage and favoritism, as in authoritarian states where there is no room for maneuver.

12. Rousso and Conan, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

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Vichy historians, who are more numerous than those who study WWI or decolonization, were so sensitive that they overreacted to the slightest criticism. My remarks were twisted and quoted out of context.[13] This twofold reaction to *Archives Interdites* best exemplifies the power of *esprit de corps*. It was praised in one context, condemned in another. Inside the guild, who would dare to defend a book that, for reasons that escaped no one, eminent colleagues were attacking? *Archives Interdites* aroused *Schadenfreude* in some, a feeling of fright and a call for solidarity among the historians I had implicated as those who define themselves by their positions of power.[14]

If I met any of my opponents at conferences or panel discussions on the subject, they kept silent. When they could, however, they opposed my participation in debates. Thus the organizer of a discussion concerning "The Contemporary Archives: How to Open Them?" sent me his regrets for being unable to invite me as he had originally intended: one had to choose between the director of the Institut d'Histoire du Temps Present (IHTP), Henry Rousso, and the author of the book that had raised the question on which the debate was being held. Most irritating, the "errors" that were rumored to abound in my text were not cited. Words like "grotesque," "nonsense," sufficed to condemn a dissenting viewpoint.

Most interesting was the reaction of historians who insisted on the need to protect privacy. Alain Gérard Slama, the *Le Figaro* critic (and the author of the most virulent review of Robert Paxton's *La France de Vichy* in 1974), Madeleine Rébérioux (who does not seem to have read *Archives Interdites*, though she felt entitled to talk about it), and others were indignant against an author who would violate "family secrets."[15] They did not want to read or hear that the law did not prevent the revelations of the names of women raped during the Liberation, unlike the case of the archives of the internment camps kept secret supposedly out of respect for the privacy of the commanders and their subordinates.

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13. Nicolas Weill interviewed a few of them and summarized their reactions: "diatribe," "tissue of errors," "naive," "grotesque." "The historian community," Weill continues, "has received Sonia Combe's book coolly, to say the least." See *Le Monde* (December 23, 1994). Pierre Bourdieu has pointed out the resistance of intellectuals to sociological analysis, "which they find gross and reductionist, and especially odious when applied directly to their own world." See Bourdieu, *Raisons Pratiques*, *op. cit.*, p. 11. With a little effort, Weill could have found historians who spoke otherwise. German and British newspapers had no difficulty in doing so, and sometimes the same persons had different things to say in *Le Monde* and *Die Zeit,* or on the Quebec cultural radio, depending on their interlocutors. To foreign observers, they admitted that access to the archives posed a problem in France and that it was good that the question had been raised.

14. One of them sent me the issue of a magazine in which he had less to say about *Archives Interdites* than about Sonia Combe, "incompetent former leftist." As a kind of apology, he included a little note to assure me that, while his criticism was severe, he nevertheless shared my analysis of archive policy. He had said not a word about it in his text.

15. M. Rebérioux, in "Politiquement Correct," in *Hommes et Libertés* (December 1994, January-February 1995), pp. 5-6.

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Only trivial explanations were provided for the alleged indecencies of *Archives Interdites:* a "settling of accounts" with people in power whose paths I had never crossed, and the reduction of my thesis to a "plot" by the state against historical truth.[16] One fact remains: all the reviews of the book (*L'Evènement du Jeudi, Le Canard Enchainé, Le Monde* with its first article by Bertrand Legendre, etc.) that appeared before Nicolas Weill's piece in *Le Monde* were positive. It is from then on that, with few exceptions, the tone changed. None of the journalists who sang the same tune as the incensed historians came to interview me, and those who did wrote rather different critiques. Most of them, however, were foreign journalists or scholars unimpressed by the status of my detractors.

Not much seemed to have changed when the *Guide des Sources de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* was published by the Archives de France on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Liberation. For once the public archives were put under the spotlight, and the shortcomings were obvious. They included a six-page inventory of files from the general police (F7) — as against twice the number from the Ministry of Agriculture (F10) — a single page of documents from the archives of the General Commissariat for Jewish Questions on its many activities between 1940 and 1945, fewer files from the Ministry of the Interior than from the Ministry for Public Works (F14), and no mention of the personal dossiers of Vichy officials, which are to remain sealed for 120 years. In short, there was a disparity among holdings, which supported my hypothesis that the government was still reluctant, fifty years after the Liberation, to turn its "sensitive" files over to public archive repositories. When they had done that, the archivists themselves hesitated to list these files in their inventories, since someone might ask for them when they were not to be released. All this did not indicate a plot, but a pattern. The gaps in this *Guide*, to whose publication the director of the IHTP had contributed, did not prevent him from proclaiming that here was proof that the archives were not concealing any "secrets." There was no mention of their release, which might imply that all these inventoried archives were available. He only seized the opportunity to continue his war on *Archives Interdites* and those who had supported it, dismissing them as "journalists." Apparently, it is the expert who must have the last word.

The Reception of Vichy-Related History by French "Experts"

If I have gone into such detail about the reception of my book, it is because it exemplifies the mechanisms of power concentrated in the social figure of the

16. This is the very argument that was thrown at me during a debate on the radio network France-Culture. I had to explain that a plot stems from conscious activities while the inaccessibility of an archive comes from the opposite: from what is not specified by legislators, from unacknowledged wishes, from the implicit desire of archivists not to publicize anything that might "harm" France, since the 1979 archives law had been written ambiguously so that it could be interpreted in various ways.

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"expert." Though he often comes from the scientific community, the expert differs from the traditional mandarin in the sense that he does not exercise his influence within the institution but primarily within the media. Placing his knowledge at the public service, he ends by serving the decision-making process and becoming an "adviser to the prince" — his consultant, as they are now called. Like princes, the media need people who think quickly and "well." Aware of this state of affairs, the expert drives home his certitudes and dispenses his advice in record time. He becomes the voice that creates authority.

When he expands his role by becoming, as De Gaulle said of Raymond Aron, "a professor at *Le Figaro* and a journalist at the Collège de France," his power is unlimited. The media and academia feed on and support each other. The adversary is automatically disqualified by the expert in the two spaces he controls. If he happens to be thrown off guard by a harsh critic or outsider, the provoked expert relies on this mode of legitimation to decide who is qualified to speak. Thus he not only eliminates dissidents but discourages potential ones, defuses any attempt at independent thinking, and demands solidarity and allegiance to provide the institution with a uniform façade. Such is the logic of the guild. To show belonging, one closes ranks around the representative of a guild who enjoys institutional power. This identification is more with function than with knowledge. In the name of the cause, the expert can condone opponents and dismiss outsiders, irrespective of the validity of their claims. Consider the following cases.

In a recent publication, an article on the gas chambers by Jean-Claude Pressac, the pharmacologist whose *Les Crématoires d'Auschwitz: la Machinerie du Meurtre de Masse* was published by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in 1993,[17] was surprising not only for its euphemistic language and its uncritical use of the Nazi vocabulary, but also for its conclusions.[18] Only Georges Bensoussan and Claire Ambroselli, outside scholars by guild standards, were disturbed by it.[19] That this article was able to appear alongside contributions of historians arguing the opposite, raised no outcry among historians of the present. They kept quiet, as did the experts. The publication had been edited by one of them, who apparently had not bothered to read Pressac's contribution. After all, the author was an "expert" because he had previously been published by the CNRS, and thus accredited by the institution.

The next is more a case of censorship than one of carelessness. In February 1992, Princeton University Press published *Artists under Vichy: A Case of Prejudice and Persecution*, by Michèle C. Cone. In the preface, Cone surveyed the available literature and took issue with a French scholar. She emphasized the racial

17. Jean Claude Pressac, "La Technique des Chambres á Gaz," in *L'Histoire* (March 1995).

18. *La Déportation. Le Systeme Concentrationnaire Nazi*, ed. by François Bédarida and Laurent Gervereau (Paris: Musée d'Histoire Contemporaine-BDIC, 1995), pp.185-197.

19. See *Le Monde Juif* (January-April 1996), pp. 66-67.

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persecution suffered by artists of Jewish origin more than did her French colleague, Laurence Bertrand Dorleac. Cone also questioned a "revisionist" history that tends to blur differences in behavior under the Occupation. Just before the book was to appear, Princeton University Press received a phone call from Professor Ezra Suleiman of Princeton University, who passed along a message from Bertrand Dorleac against publishing Cone's book. Failing that, Bertrand Dorleac, then under contract with Le Seuil for a book on the same subject as Cone, threatened Princeton University Press with a lawsuit for defamation, alleging that Cone had called her a "negationist." An impressive list of prestigious scholars — the "usual suspects" — testified in writing that such was not the case. It fell on Robert Paxton, the American expert on Vichy, to clarify that the notion of "revisionist history" used by Cone in no way meant "negationist" and that the usage was current among Anglo-American historians. Cone's book did appear in the US, but it has not found a publisher in France. Cone sought to clarify her position in *Vingtième Siècle,* where her French colleague is a contributor, but was rebuffed. Was this meant to help a French historian to protect her "turf," or is French historiography on Vichy so unsure of itself that it cannot tolerate the slightest criticism?

Consider the Vichy debate in the autumn of 1994 when, with rare exceptions, only one voice was heard, that of the experts. It began with a book by Pierre Péan, about the early years of François Mitterrand — allegedly a book of "revelations" that the President wanted to make public during his lifetime.[20] To the extent that the prevailing image of Mitterrand as a resistance fighter was replaced by that of Mitterrand as a Vichy official, Péan's book raised two questions: were there other "secrets" or "taboos" about Vichy, especially about the network of former Vichyites in the President's very entourage; and if this was the case, why had historians said nothing about it?

Péan relied on unpublished archives, public and private. Some could probably have been consulted by discreet historians, others only by Péan, such as the BCRA files (the foreign counter-espionage department of the Resistance) and the famous Corre list of the members of the pro-fascist Cagoule, where Mitterrand's name was allegedly spotted. Péan says no. Since he does not cite his source (as usual with him), indicating neither the archive where this list can be found nor its classification number, no one can verify his claims. Probably this is irrelevant in relation to Mitterrand's long political trajectory. Yet, it is a breach of the rules of the historians' profession and is one of the consequences of the policy of selective access to archives: when a document is more "sensitive" than others, its consultation depends on privilege. It must remain clandestine and unlisted.

Beyond the fact that he was dealing with the President, Péan exhumed a banal figure: a Vichy functionary going over to the Resistance at a time when the outcome of the war was becoming clear, a figure suggesting the ambiguous and

20. Pierre Péan, *Une Jeunesse Française* (Paris: Fayard, 1994).

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opportunistic behavior of many during the Occupation. By his "forgetfulness" concerning the anti-Jewish statutes, the President himself stirred up memories on this most painful point. In short, as France was once again in the grip of its past, and the debate reached all of society, the experts had to intervene. The importance of what was at stake encouraged dissident voices such as Pierre Birnbaum and Claire Andrieu; recourse to foreign historians (Robert Paxton, Zeev Sternhell) made the divisions clear. Yet those in France entrusted with writing the history of the "dark years" kept stressing Vichy's "complexity," in the name of which only experts were qualified to speak.[21]

At first sight, it seemed to be a classical guild defense which is directly triggered only when the guild feels threatened. Such is the predicament of contemporary history — a field whose connections with living memory show the extent to which it still sees itself challenged by the "witnesses and actors of history," as well, of course, by independent historians and journalists. In the November 1994 issue of *Esprit*, its editor, Joel Roman, brutally challenged the right to speak of those who broke with this hegemonic discourse: "It is all the more regrettable that a few voices claiming to be historians (particularly Claire Andrieu in *Le Monde* on September 21 and Zeev Sternhell on October 21), who are obviously unaware of all this historiographic work [by French historians], substitute police procedures for the work of the historian, and resort to methods one would have thought long extinct: amalgams, anachronisms, when it is not a matter of the deliberate falsifying of facts and dates." Given Andrieu's and Sternhell's qualifications, one can only wonder who can claim to be a historian, and the source of the authority of the author of such violent remarks.

The defense of their turf by Vichy experts and their supporters became less tactful as urgency and uneasiness grew. They pounced on *Une Jeunesse Française* because it concerned the then President of France and because this incursion of a journalist into the secrets of the Vichy administration and then of the resistance highlighted the shortcomings of professional historiography. Indeed, the media treatment of Péan's book (presenting it as a book of "revelations") suggested that the historians had not done their job. "What have the historians done?" Pierre Birnbaum wondered.[22] "If there has been silence," it was remarked in the May-June 1993 issue of *Annales* devoted to Vichy, "it is the historians' doing." All this recalled the "oversights" of the first works by historians of the period, their subordination to the politicians' wishes leading them to spin out a sanitized tale. The resistance had been the foundation of the "family novel" on which post-WWII national identity had been built.

The anachronistic and teleological view with which "laymen" are charged by Vichy experts eliminates the question of choice and commitment. Do they mean that since a large portion of French society, especially *respectable* society,

21. *Le Monde* (September 19, 1994).
22. *Le Monde* (October 21, 1994).

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had anti-Semitic prejudices, it cannot be reproached for failing to oppose the anti-Jewish statutes? It is one thing to point out the different sensitivity to the Jewish question between 1940 and 1990, and quite another to assert that the categories of thought of fifty years ago were radically different from ours, as the accusation of "anachronism" suggests. One then runs the opposite risk of underestimating the possibility of choice under Vichy in the name of the republican values of yesterday and today. Even if the anti-Jewish statutes had not led, as people learned later, to the murder of Jews, would they have been more acceptable? The real question deals with something else. Robert Paxton tried to point this out in an interview: "*Q*: How do you explain the persistence of Vichy networks around François Mitterrand? *A*: The French elite includes plenty of individuals who followed the same path as François Mitterrand. This distorts French political life and makes it, in many respects, unhealthy because of all the secrets it conceals. *Q*: How do we overcome it? *A*: By facilitating access to the archives, thanks to the advent of a new generation of scholars, and finally thanks to a public that today is more eager to know. I am a professor. My professional bent still makes me inclined to believe in teaching."[23]

Compare this with the remarks by the director of the IHTP in an interview granted about the same time: "*Q*: Actually, what Péan's book illustrates is how individuals who worked within the Vichy government, adhered to its ideology and supported its policies, could also end up joining the Resistance. *A*: That is old stuff to a historian and anyway no 'revelation' . . . It has been a long time now since there has been anything fundamental to 'reveal' about Vichy."[24]

While for Robert Paxton, historians and society still have something to learn, the director of the IHTP, whose job it is to write this past, figured that everything has already been said. In fact, he had already said so in *Vichy, un Passé qui ne Passe pas* — a title borrowed from the famous article by Ernst Nolte, published in *Die Zeit* at the time of the *Historikerstreit* of the 1980s. But if Paxton spoke of secrets that Rousso did not see, was not there a misunderstanding? In *Archives Interdites,* I had spoken not so much of secrets as of silences, and shown that the obstacles to be overcome before reaching the archive indicated that something was being held back. Appearances suggested the existence of secrets, but, as the philosopher would say, "as long as I do not know the content of the secret, I can't call it a secret." Such is indeed the aporia of the inquiry. Besides, the fact of having been let in on the secret does not thereby abolish it. It continues to exist for others as long as the silence surrounding it is respected.

Annie Lacroix-Riz recently informed me that her research on the subject of "French Elites and Economic Collaboration: Finance, Industry, Vichy and the Reich" had been rejected for publication. One of her colleagues had given her the reasons in writing: Lacroix-Riz had consulted the personal files of the Ministry

23. *Telerama,* 21 September 1994.
24. See *L'Histoire* (October 1994).

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of Economy and Finances although the ban had not been lifted. "I wonder," wrote this colleague, "about the timeliness and risk of such publication, since the Treasury authorities might very well revoke the permission they gave to consult the archives and close them again, considering that they have been used improperly." (It is not so easy to get around the guild!)

Vichy Scholarship and the Need for Accessible Archives

When the question of archives closed "in the name of respect for privacy" is raised, there is the suspicion of wanting to embark on denunciation. "Let us stop denouncing and try to understand Vichy" is what the authors of *Vichy, un Passé qui ne Passe pas* essentially say. In its Fall 1995 issue, the magazine *L'Infini* published an article by Elisabeth Roudinesco entitled "Georges Mauco (1899-1988), a Psychoanalyst in the Service of Vichy: From Anti-Semitism to Psychopedagogy," which claimed that during the Occupation the founder of the CMPP (Centres Medico-Psychopedagogiques) had contributed to the magazine *L'Ethnie Française* — a publication whose title indicates its outlook. It is not clear whether Roudinesco made "improper use" of certain archives. In itself, the information about his past is not of particular interest, except to wonder about a possible symptom of collective amnesia in the generation of postwar French psychoanalysts who were never bothered by Mauco. What is gained by saying that we ought finally to turn the page on Vichy when all the pages have not yet been read?

Despite its style, *Vichy, un Passé qui ne Passe pas* is not mere journalism. It indicates in what direction accounts of Vichy might go: the Occupation is taking up a "disproportionate" place compared to other periods in the nation's history and is turning into an "obsession" because the French feel guilty about their attitude during the last war. Belated pangs of conscience over genocide lie at the root of a Judeocentrism with "perverse effects." One "sometimes even forgets that the major crimes of the period, beginning with the extermination of the Jews, were premeditated by the Nazis and not by Vichy."[25]

This insistence on the secondary role of Vichy in genocide, one of the recurrent themes of the book, ends up producing a feeling of uneasiness: has anyone ever claimed the opposite? It is hard to grasp the meaning of this tireless claim that Vichy is guilty, of course, but one must not forget that the extermination of the Jews was the work of the Third Reich. In Germany, Nolte's observation that the Gulag preceded Auschwitz has been interpreted as an attempt to relativize (not to deny) the crimes of the Third Reich. Does the fact that the idea of extermination germinated in Nazi heads redeem Vichy from its collaboration on this point, which will remain, like it or not, the salient feature of its policy? For several years the centrality of Auschwitz has guided American and German historians. It was even one of the last concerns of Martin Brozsat, director of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte in Munich. But that is a different matter. As formulated by Rousso and

25. See Rousso/Conan, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

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Conan, this question loses its legitimacy. The feeling one is left with is that it is all a maneuver to banish guilt. What can be meant by this "disproportionate" place supposedly occupied by Vichy? Should the fact that the Vichy regime lasted "only" four years keep Vichy from being set radically apart in the minds of those who experienced it as part of the nation's 20th century history? As for understanding its policies, which are allegedly seen only through the prism of racial persecution, is it possible not to stumble on that point at one moment or other?

Should historical discourse, like fashion, be subjected to the need to turn over a new leaf? In spite of their pronounced taste for the Freudian vocabulary, the authors of *Vichy, un Passé qui ne Passe pas,* who diagnose a collective neurosis, do not consider the roots of the sickness. Obsession always signals a gap in knowledge, i.e., the economic collaboration, the *épuration,* the administrative continuity between Vichy and the Republic, etc. To take that obsession into consideration means to reaffirm the need to confront these mine fields, "blank spaces" that give rise to rumors and legends. Such a study would no doubt transcend "Judeocentric" concerns, which does not mean that it could ignore the attitude of the resistance toward the Jewish question. Yet, the archives that would make it possible to undertake a real sociological study of the resistance are inaccessible.

It would also be necessary to recognize how difficult it is to comprehend the social behavior of a population living under exceptional conditions, and yet one should resist the temptation to mitigate this problem by such reassuring statements as, e.g., that the French saved a greater number of Jews than Vichy deported. To the extent that such statements are not and cannot be the result of new investigations, they suggest a rehabilitation of society under the Occupation, presented in *Vichy, un Passé qui ne Passe pas* as the therapy that its authors prescribe against obsession. This is a curious analysis, which leaves memory in peace and reinforces false memories, while abandoning the patient to his insomnia. But then, what is the historian's task? Is it to establish the historical truth or to save the nation's honor?

Conclusion

In putting my finger on the question of the historians' responsibility, starting with the attitude toward the policy concerning the accessibility of archives, I was led to inquire into their social function. In France, the state meddles only indirectly in the writing of history. It is only the distant and somewhat impersonal paymaster. In maintaining its control over the sources, the state keeps up a culture of secrecy with the objective complicity of those who share it. As for the archivists, they have the excuse of being, in certain cases (Ministry of the Interior, files of the Renseignements Généraux, etc.) subject to a kind of blackmail by administrations that threaten to stop handing over their archives if, having passed into the public domain, they can be consulted.

The state's control over "its" archives essentially affects scholars dealing

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with contemporary political history. It is they who are most vulnerable and thus most likely to make deals with the administration. But there is nothing to indicate that the upper echelon of the bureaucracy is unanimous on this question. The connection that emerges between the intervention by historians in the Vichy controversy and their attack on *Archives Interdites* further suggests that the historians in this field exceed the wishes of the state, as though they understood their mission as that of high functionaries. It is again *Vichy, un Passé qui ne Passe pas* that gives this away with passages such as the following, chosen almost at random: "Paul Touvier has been sentenced. And that is all to the good. France has held its trial for crimes against humanity and can no longer be accused of fleeing its past." Accused by whom? Must scholars take account of the image of France abroad?

This posture of historians is reminiscent of the "priest and soldier at the service of a sanctified nation."[26] There is also something reminiscent of the role of the psychiatrist before the law (mentioned by Foucault), when the historian is put in the position of "recommending punishment" and oversteps his boundaries by denying, for example, the importance of a Papon trial (under the pretext that it would add nothing to our knowledge of history), confusing the mission of history and that of justice — even if the state is reluctant to try its former employee. Such a transgression leads back to the question of the ambivalent status of historiography. In his "media persona," the expert strives to provide a more suitable and acceptable image of behavior under Vichy, even when this representation does not correspond to the result of other historians' labors. The divorce between the experts' accounts in the media and scholarship that sharpens historical knowledge is obvious. What needs to be questioned is the social function of historians promoted to experts, the way they redistribute knowledge outside the scientific community. In discussing Asher Cohen's *Les Persécutions et les Sauvetages/Juifs et Français sous l'Occupation et sous Vichy,* Paxton remarked that René Rémond, the historian who wrote the preface to the book, had skipped "the growing hostility toward Jews on the Côte d'Azur at the beginning of 1942" — mentioned by the author — so as only to dwell on other more soothing facts, and that this omission had been repeated by J.-P. Rioux in his review in *Le Monde.* "Thus," Paxton went on, "the French public will have missed this book's nuances."[27]

It is a risky business to be a historian dealing with contemporary events. The debate that runs through contemporary Israeli historiography on its contribution to building the Zionist national identity is a typical example.[28] Locked in

26. On this subject, see Steven Englund, "De l'Usage de la Nation par les Historiens et Réciproquement," in *Politix*, No. 26, 1994, translated from *The Journal of Modern History*, No. 64. (June 1992), pp. 299-320.

27. R. Paxton, "Resistance or Indifference," in *Pattern of Prejudice* (April 3, 1994), pp. 106-108.

28. On this subject, see "Les Nouveaux Enjeux de l'Historiographie Israelienne," in *La Lettre d'Information du Centre de Recherche Français de Jerusalem,* published by Florence Heymann (December 1995).

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the intimacy of reasons of state, one sometimes falls into unreason. The *Jerusalem Report* recently told of the struggle by the Armenian minority in Israel to have the 1915 genocide acknowledged as having taken place. Some Israeli historians supported them, refusing to deny historical reality for reasons of state (Turkey is Israel's only "ally" in the Middle East). This is something that eminent historians in Ankara or Istanbul do regularly when they explain, reinforced by their special permission to work in the Ottoman archives (access to which is constantly denied to others), that they are in a position to state categorically: there were never any written orders to massacre the Armenians. Invested, especially in France, with the responsibility to conceive the nation-state in its origin and continuity, historians, unless they are careful, run the risk of letting themselves be guided by "functional imperatives serving both the production of consensus and social integration." This was Jürgen Habermas' warning to German historians. He was a non-historian, as his opponents never stopped emphasizing, whose vigilance had launched the *Historikerstreit* and who, on that occasion, was surprised to discover among scientists the attitudes of "political men engaged in the conflict."[29]

29. *Devant l'Histoire* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1988), p. 57.

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Reviews:

Capitalism or Secularism? Search for the Culprit

Patrick Murray, *Reflections on Commercial Life: An Anthology of Classic Texts from Plato to the Present* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), xiv+486 pp.

This anthology will be very useful for students interested in the intersection of economic and political theory. The selections have been chosen judiciously and cover the whole Western tradition from Plato to Baudrillard. Excellent bibliographies for each extract are provided and the book is stylishly produced.

Patrick Murray's comprehensive introduction provides a good typological classification of the various theories represented in the volume. He also provides brief critical assessments of each position and, prior to that, an account of what defines "commercial life" as such. He focuses on "commercial life" as opposed to "capitalism" because some commodification and capitalization can be found in almost every society. "Commercial" practices and criticism of their over-extension long preceded the capitalist era; e.g., they can be found in Plato and Aristotle.

For Murray, capitalism refers to a society in which almost all production is subsumed under the commodity form and thus subordinated to profit and the use of money to procure more money. In a further attempt to clarify the nature of the commercial, Murray deploys three sets of distinctions. The first is from Polanyi and is criticized by Murray. Polanyi distinguished between "embedded" forms of commercial practice in traditional societies and "disembedded" forms of modern capitalist practice. As Murray points out, this implies that the modern economy, as disembedded, is the pure, simple form of economy which was somehow latent in traditional societies, although inhibited by them. This also applies to Marx's historicism. A gift exchange economy is still an economy, i.e., a specific mode of production and exchange. Murray's analysis could be extended by stressing that the illusion of modern capitalism — that it is a pure, simple economy, free from substantive interference from other socio-political categories — is a necessary condition of its very possibility and the attempt to abstract "the economy" and achieve a "simple" edifice is what defines this particular economy.

Murray's second distinction deals with formal and real subsumption. This is an extremely helpful distinction in that it allows discrimination between different degrees of commercialization. For example, at earlier times a loaf of

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bread might be formally subsumed as a commodity, i.e., produced for profit and not just domestic need. At a later stage, however, interests of profit will result in the phenomenon of a wrapped, sliced loaf. This is real subsumption. The only qualification to Murray's analysis of these categories is that, on the whole, real subsumption follows so quickly on the heels of formal subsumption that it is difficult to tell them apart.[1]

This question of the close association of formal and real subsumption is pertinent to Murray's third distinction, between "commerce" and "commercialism." Roughly speaking, the latter is simply the former gone too far. Murray provides a list of the characteristics of commercialism, in terms of money-making as an end in itself, corruption of craft, and the phenomena of hype and simony in modern commercial practice. However, at one point he appears to draw the line between commerce and commercialism in terms of the transition from formal to real subsumption (p. 10), but at a later point suggests that commercialism is the overextension of both formal and real subsumption (p. 13). In the first case, the previously mentioned question arises: is there *ever formal* subsumption without *real* subsumption? Will not the bought and sold loaf of bread inevitably be sliced sooner or later? (Of course, further down the line, the original unsliced loaf will return as a rarefied heritage fetish to reap further profit). Moreover, Murray's examples of formal without real subsumption, e.g., a building and loan company still concerned with protecting and constructing a local community, cannot count as a full case even of formal subsumption in terms of capitalist market practices. This would amount to some form of co-operative banking in which the point of money is not ultimately to produce more money, just as the building enterprise cited would be concerned more with the teleology of building than with selling houses for profit. As soon as other objectives besides profit and usury come into the picture, it is no longer a matter of real capitalism and, moreover, it presupposes a socially accepted notion of reasonable profits and interest rates adjusted to satisfy peoples' socially accepted needs or, alternatively, a system of awards according to attainment of publicly recognized goals or virtues. By contrast, Murray is a little vague about what capitalism really is. For example, does he accept, with Marx, that it involves the extraction of surplus value from labor or, with Baudrillard, a surplus desire from exchange? This question is relevant to Murray's illuminating discussion of simony. By the latter term, Murray refers to unacceptable commercializations of "sacred" value, such as human health, the body, the classroom, etc. He also raises the crucial question of the point at which selling one's labor

1. In her *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (London: Macmillan, 1996), Lisa Jardine argues that artworks in the Renaissance underwent formal subsumption due to a burgeoning trade, when owning portraits and other such items came to be regarded as capital investments. But this same development was commensurate with a *real* subsumption of artworks, since artists were now provoked to alter the character and content of their work and instead paint portraits of their patrons and promote their worldly glories.

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becomes continuous with selling oneself. This could be pressed further. First of all, is not Marx's question still relevant: whether selling one's labor in a capitalist context in which it is not assessed for its intrinsic worth either for the community or for one's own self-development is not always perforce simonistic? This would lead, secondly, to the question of whether everything is not in fact sacred, and the very enforcement of a precious sacred arena, like the idea of a distinct religious realm, is not itself an invention of commercialism. Does not the latter need these apparently uncontaminated arenas in order to ensure peoples' acquiescence in the general alienation of most of life? Is not the preservation of such realms in fact a *carnival* concession? To be concerned to keep the classroom free from advertising and the other *accoutrements* of secular commercialism is no more than a sentimental imperative, since such seclusion would do nothing to prepare pupils for the thoroughly commercialized world which awaits them. In any case, the classroom is now undergoing a radical commercialization, and this could only be reversed if the simonistic corruption of society as a whole were reversed.

Thus, in the end, Murray hints at some sort of social democratic or social market rather than socialist mitigation of the commercial, without mentioning that the former two options are coming under increasing pressure from an ever more rampant commercialism. Indeed, his idea that one should limit the commercial seems to fall back on the notion that the commercial is the pure economic, which he has himself so well criticized. But why, for example, should not gift exchange in some form be considered an alternative viable non-commercial economy? Failure to raise this sort of question fits with Murray's hasty and perfunctory dismissal of traditionalism. This blanket term seems to elide more recent anthropological research, which has indicated the diversity of traditional societies, many highly individualist, and, more importantly, overlooks the fact that some traditional societies (e.g., Islam, with its well developed "communitarian" economic system) are not simply "local" but have a universal agenda, albeit not one based on reason in the post-Enlightenment sense. Murray is a little too ready to go along with Weber's purely negative definition of the non-Western and premodern, namely, that if the latter are not dominated by instrumental rationality, they are seen as irrational and tradition as a kind of moronic identical repetition, which all the evidence suggests it is not.

The issue of Murray's attitude to tradition is relevant to the question of what he finally wants to recommend. His accounts and criticisms of modern, liberal, naturalistic and utilitarian defenses of commercialism are all accurate, astute and helpful. And he demonstrates in an exemplary fashion just why escape from commercialism seems to demand a reconsideration of teleology. However, if there are intrinsic universal goals for human life, that implies some orientation to the transcendent, because a purely immanentist teleology would reduce to precisely the kind of minimalist naturalism Murray so correctly criticizes. It would permit such a thin notion of what everyone wants as to be useless in generating

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shared values which could mitigate the rule of commercial formalism. Hence, to consider teleology means to reconsider certain forms of traditionalism and the idea that something other than simple, uninflected reason might provide us access to the universal. For example, could such access be provided by such stances as faith, desire for the abiding good, or even certain exemplary people or sites of significance? When Murray discusses the theological dimension of Locke's theory, he conflates it with the banality of divine command theory, whereas Locke considers that the overriding economic imperatives to preserve the fertility of nature and subordinate property to charity are grounded in the belief that the world is divine creation, that it is given by a transcendent source in order that it might flourish, just as we are created in order that we ourselves charitably give to others and give back to God.

In contrast to this example of a traditional vision, surviving at least in one dimension of the work of an early modern thinker, Murray seems only to offer a vision of the world half handed over to de-sanctified and de-ethicized commerce, while the rest of life seeks to pursue intrinsic goals for which no transcendent source is any longer available. What is perhaps evaded here, for all Murray's impressively comprehensive account of the concomitants of capitalism and struggle to find some grounds of mitigation (such that he is by no means unaware of the difficulties of the teleological proposal) is the question as to whether secularization is not more fundamental than commercialization, rather than just one of its accompanying features. Indeed, Murray remains neutral as to whether commercialization is the driving force of modernity, or whether it is just one aspect of a wider drive toward rationalization or formalization. The latter position has been articulated in different ways by Weber, Foucault, and Baudrillard (whose views are represented in Murray's anthology). However, if formalization in all spheres is the more fundamental phenomenon, then one must ask, why has this occurred? And the answer is clear. The public realm became increasingly mediated by a formalized *mathesis* because of the collapse, for various reasons, of belief in and support for substantive, collective norms which, since they necessarily exceeded the possibility of grounding in an apodictic reason, were referred to a transcendent dimension. In other words, formalization is itself the manifestation of secularization. Hence, one can conclude that to arrive at the necessity of a teleological critique of commercialism is to arrive, perhaps without knowing it, at the necessity of a theological critique. The only authentic alternative to the sliced loaf, exchanged for cash, is perhaps not some other type of bread as such, but the *compagnia* resulting from the sharing of the bread of sacrifice.

Catherine Pickstock

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Canadian Conservatism and the Managerial State

William D. Gairdner, *On Higher Ground: Reclaiming a Civil Society* (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1996), 224+xiv pp.

William D. Gairdner is a rare bird in Canada: a well-known conservative critic who writes and thinks clearly and, consequently, whose voice is heard. His combination of athletic, academic and business achievement is also rare. This is Gairdner's fourth book.[1] Although he could certainly write in a more scholarly style, he prefers a popular mode of expression accessible to most "decent, ordinary Canadians." In 1994 Gairdner became a regular columnist for *The Edmonton Journal*, when its publisher sought to provide some balance for his newspaper's "left" perspective. *On Higher Grounds* is a collection of these columns. Given the circumstances of their original appearance, it is not surprising that it turned out to be a work in which serious insights are articulated in terms of a weak and underdeveloped theoretical framework, precluding translation into a politically viable program.[2]

Gairdner does not mince words. In the book's "Preface" he writes: ". . . my complaint about all so-called social democracies is that relinquishing personal and community responsibilities to governments has the dangerous effect of softening the mind and will; of turning of what ought to be enduring moral debates and standards into disposable opinions, values, or perspectives, as the state leads us toward one bankrupt utopia after another" (p. xiii). This sets the tone for the entire book and its critique of an "infantilizing" managerial-therapeutic regime. Its main theme is the rise of the managerial state in Canada and the consequent disintegration of Canadian "civil society," which leads Gairdner to characterize this society as "A Tyranny of Individuals" mired in a crass materialism. The

1. He has already published *The Trouble with Canada* (1990), *The War Against the Family* (1992), and *Constitutional Crack-Up* (1994) — all with Stoddart.

2. Gairdner's concern with reaching a broad audience is not limited to writing readable books. His most recent initiative is the establishment of a major, broadly Center-Right, Canada-wide association called *Civitas* (which held its founding National Conference in Toronto in April 1997). It is projected as a locus where serious debate can take place in a relaxed atmosphere, outside party-political strictures. This choice may have something to do with Gairdner's frustrations with earlier political involvements. A few years ago Gairdner virtually became *persona non grata* in Reform Party circles as a result of one almost offhand line in one of his books, which called for limiting Asian immigration to Western Canada. The media picked up on it and inflated it as symptomatic of a pathological anti-Chinese hatred. In its continuing struggle to avoid the dreaded "racist" label, the Reform Party felt obliged to dissociate itself from Gairdner and he withdrew from "party politics" shortly thereafter.

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main points of reference are "the Ancients" and Louis Dumont: "when respected sages spoke of the eternal rhythm of things and the need to be good, everyone agreed that there were, in fact, such things . . . When they asked themselves what purpose life had, they came to the general conclusion that it must be more than mere pleasure. It was the pursuit of those higher things, for oneself, and for society" (pp. 3-4). A libertarian well-known for his defense of the market and of free enterprise, Gairdner relies on Dumont to avoid overemphasizing abstract individualism — a typical libertarian occupational hazard: "A 'holistic' society . . . — a real, natural community — is unified by an ideology of hierarchical values. There is a shared notion of good, better, best, and bad . . . praise and stigma flow accordingly, unifying all in the same moral bond. What [Dumont] terms an 'individualistic' society is the opposite. At the core of its ideology is 'equality,' the idea of freedom from all oppressive authority . . . eventually, the equal freedom campaign had to go on a search-and-destroy mission for ever-diminishing authority targets. Even ordinary praise and stigma would have to go, in the name of moral neutrality . . . More of this freedom means less community" (p. 4). Recycling an outlook going back to Plato, Gairdner writes that without virtues "democracy would soon deteriorate into soft, then hard tyranny. For only a citizenry rich in the manly virtues could possibly stave off the equalizing tendencies of democracy that will always . . . destroy . . . heroic notions of the good . . . raising the unworthy and lowering the worthy" (p. 21).

Such a traditional outlook will have nothing to do with today's feminist chatter about the abolition of all differences — first and foremost those engendered by patriarchy — and the reduction of human beings to interchangeable statistical units endowed only with whatever rights the state is willing to bestow on them. With uncommon verve, Gairdner writes: "We sicken, too, of the silly, maleness-dissolving notion that our opposite genders are 'socially constructed' and not an obvious, wonderful, and very exciting natural fact of normal biology around which all human life revolves; we especially sicken of the message that men and their manly values are bad" (p. 22). In a piece titled: "Which One Is the Wife?" — a pointed quip against homosexual marriage (attributed as a comment to Gairdner's twelve-year old son, after watching a TV debate on the issue) — he provides a sharp defense of civil society and privilege (which he considers inextricably connected). The objective is to safeguard local autonomy, particularity and freedom against an omnipotent state seeking to homogenize everyone by destroying whatever institutions escape its grasp. After all, "Reclaiming Civil Society" is the book's subtitle. But here is where problems begin to creep up.

The concept of civil society is an integral part of precisely that *liberal* New Class ideology Gairdner so violently opposes. To the extent that it remains too modernist and therefore unable to deal with that precategorical lived dimension generating those traditions and custom which weld an otherwise mere aggregation of individuals into a people, it is far too weak, ambiguous and contradictory

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to support the devastating critique Gairdner wants to unleash. It is broadly described as follows: "Above us is the involuntary control of the state . . . In the middle is the social control of millions of voluntary groups that comprise civil society . . . And finally, at the bottom, there are millions of autonomous individuals exercising self-control (most of the time). I contend the egalitarian state has the effect (sometimes, the ambition) of breaking down the voluntary authority of civil society through its evangelical eagerness to equalize everyone under its own coercive influence. One way it does this . . . is through Charter-style[3] attacks on our ancient social right to discriminate between those who opt into social groups, and those who do not (who nevertheless are left alone with all their normal individual rights). What we end up with is an . . . ideological war between the state and society, the end consequence of which . . . is to weaken society and strengthen the state" (pp. 24-26).

This account is far too "bourgeois," therefore one-sided, in restricting all institutions other than the state to "voluntary associations" constituted by autonomous individuals exercising their prerogatives to aggregate freely while marginalizing all other "individuals at the bottom" — presumably a new version of the old *sans-coulottes* of French Revolution vintage — to social and political irrelevance. But these latter day *sans-coulottes* systematically blotted out of the political spectrum are precisely "the decent, ordinary Canadians" Gairdner wants to address and whose interests he seeks to defend. Worse yet, in traditional 19th century treatises on the subjects, such as, e.g., Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie* or Savigny's *Von Beruf unsrer Zeit*, the main components of civil society were primarily business corporations. Thus, it is no mere coincidence that traditional conservatives at the time, from Bonald and de Maistre to Donoso Cortès, were deeply suspicious of capitalism as a system which ruthlessly tore apart "organic society" (similar concerns, of course, resurface in some of today's most profound critics of modern society, such as, e.g., Christopher Lasch). The upshot is that Gairdner's uncritical appropriation of the liberal concept of civil society is too restrictive in that it excludes too many "decent, ordinary Canadians." In recycling a problematic bourgeois notion, he opens himself up to the same charges Marx and other 19th century socialists hurled against the bourgeoisie: it forgot all about the fourth estate. At the same time, civil society is also defined in such a way as to include too much which, left unchecked, has historically destroyed precisely the sort of "organic society" Gairdner thinks his civil society is meant to defend.

At the same time, the concept of civil society as currently used is also too broad in that, in addition to large, impersonal business corporations which are

3. Gairdner is referring to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982), the core document of Canadian liberalism, and of Canada as a liberal country. Canada's British Common Law traditions until 1982 were markedly different from the system of juridical adjudication that had characterized the US for much of its history, which intensified after the 1950s. Today, Canada has its own "activist judiciary" that seems to be pushing rights dogmatism further and faster than even the US courts.

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functionally indistinguishable from the state and whose inefficient bureaucratic structure has absolutely nothing to do with any kind of entrepreneurship, it mostly includes aggregations which are by no means "voluntary" in the sense liberals and Gairdner understand the term. In societies such as Canada, many if not most of the groups in civil society define themselves along ethnic lines. These groups are by no means *voluntary*. Yet today ethnic identity is one of the most legitimate criteria for qualifying groups as integral parts of civil society. Similarly, it is well known that in the past various parts of civil society, groups constituting the so-called majority culture, systematically limited membership on the basis of ethnicity, i.e., in ways obviously not predicated merely on formal rational criteria. Thus, historically, civil society has never quite come up to the standards advocated by its liberal apologists. This should come as no surprise: since the formal dimension is never adequate to that which it seeks to formalize, its deployment must always be supplemented by recourse to the informal residue it leaves behind. This is why the entrepreneur is *always* a better decision-maker than the bureaucrat: while the latter is necessarily limited in his *modus operandi* to formal rules and procedures, the former can access the totality of his experiences, including hunches, feelings and intuitions which, far from being mere repositories of irrational prejudices, are actually invaluable cultural resources sedimented deeply within the very structure of personality. What this means is that the "voluntary" dimension is often inadequate and ends up unwittingly relying on this "politically incorrect" — consequently either unacknowledged or outrightly repressed — pre-formal dimension routinely dismissed as residual irrational prejudices. Civil society is therefore possible only in historical contexts where it has not yet had the opportunity to weaken too much or altogether destroy traditional of "holistic" society which it parasitically relies on in order to function at all. In fact, the dialectic of the crisis of liberalism unfolds toward self-destruction not because it *fails*, but because it *succeeds* and thus destroys that traditional framework on which it depends, thus undermining the very conditions for its own reproducibility. This is why it is surprising to run into *soi disant* conservatives celebrating the virtues of civil society.

The problem here is with Gairdner's uncritical appropriation of an ideologically-laden concept ultimately inimical to the rest of his political philosophy. Historically, the concept of "civil society" was developed in the 18th century to designate those social and economic domains the rising bourgeoisie had secured from lingering feudal elites. Although up to Hegel's times "*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*" was understood is this sense, after 1848 the sharp distinction between state and society disappeared. Thus for Marx and subsequent writers it came to mean primarily "bourgeois" society and lost its earlier neutrality *vis à vis* the state. It is no accident that in the 20th century, with the possible exception of Antonio Gramsci, practically no thinkers ever used "civil society" in the earlier 18th century sense. The concept was successfully recycled in the 1970s by East

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European dissidents frustrated by the seeming impossibility to reform communist regimes. At that time it once again came to designate a social enclave free of state domination. With the collapse of communism, however, the concept became once again meaningless — at least in liberal-democratic societies. It was kept in vogue only by emigrée East European and other New Class intellectuals who had come to realize that state-imposed social engineering had failed in the West as much as in the East and that, if it was to work at all, had to be democratically generated and guided morally rather than "administratively." This is why, in the age of post-communism, the infamous "five-year plans," or their Western functional equivalents (such as the New Deal) have given way to "political correctness" — a much more effective strategy to reconstruct collective consciousness than by means of the old state police. Unlike "the party line" enforced by the state, political correctness can function only as the free expression of a seemingly autonomous "civil society." As such, the concept is a "democratic" Trojan horse meant to relegitimate those very same totalitarian policies impossible to impose from above. That "conservatives" such as Gairdner have bought into such a bogus theoretical framework is only a symptom of the cultural hegemony these East European intellectuals have succeeded in establishing within the social sciences and the humanities in the West with the complicity of a Western New Class desperately in need to buttress its own flaccid brand of liberal ideology.

Following this liberal logic, Gairdner seeks to articulate his political philosophy by defending a civil society presumably being annihilated by the state. But, if anything, the opposite is the case. Already in the 1920s Carl Schmitt — probably the most perceptive critic of liberalism in the 20th century — argued that "the equation state=politics becomes erroneous and deceptive at exactly the moment when state and society penetrate each other,"[4] i.e., liberal democracy leads to the identity of state and society. What he meant was that economic interests had become politicized and that they increasingly instrumentalized the state, to the point that it had ceased to be an autonomous political entity. One does not have to look very hard to realize how, e.g., trade has come to plays a greater role than ideology in foreign policy. Today "civil society" is the domain of multiculturalism, feminism, environmentalism, etc. making demands on a state increasingly unable to define itself as anything but an aggregation of all of these social interests. What Gairdner should have done in his vindication of a traditional Canadian identity is to have *indicted* the very concept of civil society as a multicultural construct useful for New Class bureaucrats and politicians to redefine Canadian society as a hopelessly fragmented, culturally heterogeneous Babel able to function only if held together by a state they alone can administer and from which they derive their power. In this sense, Schmitt's analysis, developed in the late 1920s, long before the development of the New Deal and other European welfare states, has to

4. Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, ed. and trans. by George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 22.

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be expanded along the lines he himself develops later, in his work on legal systems. It is no longer only or primarily economic interests that control the state,[5] but a New Class intent on destroying any traditions or cultural particularity which could define "civil society" as anything other than an aggregation of manipulable abstract individuals which, even if subdivided into politically correct multicultural categories, remain nonetheless susceptible to direct or indirect social engineering into whatever kind of "New Man" the "experts" happen to deem desirable. Today, any defense of civil society automatically translates into a relegitimation of the New Class. When all is said and done, those groups constituting a "politically correct" civil society — from the advocates for the homeless, to anti-tabacco activists, welfare mothers or anti-racism organizations, but not the Klu Klux Klan, the militias or advocates for the legalization of drugs — cannot represent themselves. Thus they become the ward of experts and politicians allegedly safeguarding their interests through the state. Today the express lane to a successful political career begins with the advocacy of any one of these "causes." Thus it is not a matter of defending civil society against the state, but of vindicating the sovereignty of real people, with all their traditions, customs and prejudices against the allegedly superior knowledge of the New Class entrenched in the state, in academia and even in the interstices of large, bureaucratized, business organizations. Conservatism cannot redefine itself as liberalism in its youth, since today's New Class ideology against which it fights is that very same liberalism gone senile and thus forgetful of its earlier ideals. Rather, it must take up once again the radical critique of that liberalism — from both the conservative as well as the revolutionary camp — in order to prefigure concrete alternatives solidly grounded on long-standing traditions and customs.

Notwithstanding his propensity to occasionally capitulate to the New Class' cultural hegemony, Gairdner does manage to vindicate some traditional values. Thus, in "Don't Nuke the Duke" (referring to Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II) he reaches way back in conservative theory, practically to ideas of "Throne and Altar." The piece is prefaced by a defense of the hereditary principle: ". . . to speak against inheritance is to speak against achievement itself, because people work hard and burn with pride mostly to help their fam-

5. The recent Texaco scandals in the US exemplifies the extent to which capitalist interests have been marginalized in the "Brave New World" of the New Class. The inflexible code of political correctness is immediately deployed by the New Class apparatus to annihilate anyone making privately even the silliest and most careless remarks. All allegedly powerful multinational corporations can do is fire the culprits and pay ransom to the accusers. Far from being an isolated incident, this has long since become the rule — at least since Sears won its discrimination lawsuit against the government but, in the process, was almost bankrupted by the legal costs involved. Nowadays no multinational corporation, no matter how large and powerful, dares challenge the State's ruthless enforcement of political correctness. It is much easier to roll with the punches and simply pass on the extra costs of political correctness on to consumers.

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ilies and offspring" (p. 32), and followed by some claims that have not been publicly articulated for almost two centuries — at least since the French and American revolutions: "The primordial model for monarchy, of course, is the natural family, the basic hierarchical social unit of all civilizations, and (despite the musings of the United Nations) the farthest thing from a democracy. This model forms a triad for all Christian societies of Holy Family, royal family, secular family" (p. 34). Here Gairdner's classical Canadian pedigree shines through in his attempt to recycle a long-standing tradition attenuated in Britain and Continental Europe, fast disappearing in Canada and explicitly rejected in the US. Desirable as it may be to provide equal opportunity to all, inequalities not only remain but should also be preserved. The annihilation of the hereditary principle weakens families and destroys traditions. The result can only be the further impoverishment of people whose individuality, cultural identity and character structure can best be constituted within strong traditional families. The disintegration of the family leads to the disappearance of these individuals — the theme of one of Gairdner's other books and of the classical 1936 study by the Frankfurt School.[6] This results in the decline of citizenship and the reduction of individuals to mere clients of the welfare state, unable to sustain even minimally democratic institutions, thus paving the way for even more social disintegration and the triumph of the managerial-therapeutic state.

This project of generalized decadence is becoming increasingly associated with the New Class. Gairdner buys only part of this analysis. In another instance of capitulation to New Class cultural hegemony, he confuses the *dramatis personae* and ends up associating this New Class project with the New Left. This is precisely how the New Class would like to project its identity, thus inheriting by default the idealistic elan of a heterogeneous movement advocating lofty ideals such as equality, liberty and justice. But the New Left was not the New Class, even if some of its members did eventually become part of it. Similarly, the New Class only instrumentalizes New Left ideals to reproduce precisely the relations

6. More in tune than Gairdner with traditional analyses tracing the disintegration of "holistic society" to the devastating socio-psychological impact on the family by the imposition of new authoritarian relations of domination in the work-place, the Frankfurt School account already prefigured the development of the bourgeois regime into a managerial-therapeutic state. Written in 1936 Europe, however, the managerial-therepeutic state this analysis warned against was not today's benign Canadian welfare state, but Nazi Germany — although already in the early 1940s, during its American exile, it systematically outlined the structural symmetries between fascism, communism and the welfare state. Unable to articulate this critique during the subsequent Cold War, the Frankfurt School went into its notorious "theoretical hibernation" during which, pending the maturation of more opportune times, it deployed an impenetrable conceptual framework to prevent its instrumentalization by the establishment (which happened anyway in the 1980s and 1990s in the hands ends of postmodern academic intellectuals) while preserving a radical perspective for future generations. It is ironic that in the late 1990s, when the times are ripe for the recovery of such an analysis by radical critics such as Gairdner, liberal hegemony has succeeded in colonizing collective consciousness to the point that the critique can only resurface as a celebration of precisely the system originally responsible for the crisis.

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of social domination the New Left fought so hard to abolish. The New Class' politically correct world of repressed, disembodied, abstract beings forced to behave in ways contrary to their nature and, e.g., unable to poke fun at themselves and others in ethnic, sexist, racist, homophobic or any number of otherwise forbidden ways, has nothing to do with the New Left seeking freedom from all forms of oppression. Any analysis — especially from conservative quarters — that does not distinguish the two ends up indirectly bestowing undeserved moral legitimacy on the agents of modern domination while delegitimating some of the strongest sources of resistance to it.

Among other things, this is why Gairdner's "New Right Talks Like Old Left" is a problematic piece. By "Old Left" Gairdner means radical liberals such as Thomas Paine, who argued for minimal government and maximum freedom — positions which today would be identified as "libertarian." Similarly, at that time, the Old Right believed in strong central government. Today, allegedly, the positions have been reversed. Gairdner's arguments are not helped by his deployment of an idiosyncratic political vocabulary. The Old Left is not generally understood to be identical with libertarianism. The real Old Left was composed primarily of working-class movements — anarchist, social-democratic and Marxist — which fought for social and economic justice and misguidedly thought that these goals could be achieved by establishing a society regulated by the welfare state. According to Gairdner, after the 1960s what he regards as the New Left was able to establish the managerial-therapeutic regime, "the new-style welfare-state," often consciously deploying earlier social democratic rhetoric. This is seen as part of that development associated with the rise of consumerism, megacorporations, the new media and a pop-culture spreading from North America to the entire planet. But this "New Left," i.e., the managerial-therapeutic New Class, has *nothing* in common either with the Old or the New Left, and it certainly does not legitimate its power in the same way. Indeed, this technocratic New Class *qua* New Left typically promises "maximum freedom," "maximum equality" and "maximum prosperity," while introducing new and more pervasive modes of social domination. *Mutatis mutandis*, only parts of the New Right may be libertarian (most of it is composed of the dogmatic Christian New Right, which is anything but libertarian). To that extent, it is on a conflict course with the social conservatism of the Old Right and today's few remaining traditional conservatives, who were always highly suspicious of capitalism as disruptive of established social relations. Gairdner is both a *social* and an *economic* conservative. Thus he is in favor of both a free market and traditional social relations. No wonder he sounds like both an old rightist and a classical liberal. Obviously, he cannot have it both ways: he must either stand for an abstract civil society which recognizes nothing but the cash-nexus, formalism and what the Frankfurt School called "identity logic," or he must defend tradition and take a second look at the disruptive impact of translating traditional society into civil society — *tertium non datur*.

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By hypostatizing civil society as his key analytical category, Gairdner ends up generating a series of antinomies which periodically reappear throughout his otherwise penetrating critique of Canadian society. As a result, he often manages to shoot himself in the foot even before he can begin his critical marathon. His attempts to articulate his profound traditionalist instincts by means of *de facto* liberal concepts constantly lead him into frustrating positions. In this respect, he accurately reflects the predicament of conservatism today. This becomes most obvious in the section on "Separation Anxieties," where he tackles probably Canada's thorniest political problem today: Québec separatism. Instead of analyzing the problem as a consequence of Trudeau and the Liberal Party's historical strategy of attempting to homogenize Canada into a nation by means of disastrous policies such as bilingualism and generous transfer payments to the provinces to bribe them into falling in line with one of the most ambitious welfare states in the world, Gairdner opts to vindicate the New Class idea of a "Canadian nation." But Canada is too big and too diverse to be a nation — and it never was. Rather, it was a loose federation so geographically dispersed as to allow, out of necessity, the maximum possible amount of local and regional autonomy. Under such arrangements there was no "Québec problem." Each province pretty well minded its own business and that was it. Only after the liberals sought to "Canadianize" every province into a homogeneous whole susceptible to the state's social engineering and the redistributive practices necessary to bring it about did the Quebeckers find it necessary to vindicate their own cultural particularity. A truly conservative critique would begin by attacking the very concept of Canada as a "nation" — a paradigmatic *liberal* construct increasingly bankrupt everywhere in the world, originally invented by the French Revolution and having nothing to do either with conservative or revolutionary thought — rather than appropriating it and then forcing it not only on Québec but on the equally culturally different western and maritime provinces.

If the problem of Québec separatism is approached from within a *nationalist* framework, then Ray Conlogue's conclusions are inescapable: Canada is *one* state with *two* nations — English and French Canada.[7] Along with the liberals, Gairdner seems to assume that the Canadian state is coterminous with *one* Canadian nation. No wonder Quebeckers, who had no trouble living with English Canada for over a century as part of a loose federation, are not fooled by palliatives such as bilingualism and multiculturalism (which succeeded only in annoying to no end the rest of Canada) and resent being integrated as part and parcel of English Canada. If what is at stake is the constitution of a nation, then Quebeckers simply want their own. Despite his traditionalism, here Gairdner edits out of his consciousness the fact that many Québécois nationalists want no more and no less than what Liberal Party nationalists want for what they have tried to appro-

7. Ray Conlogue, *Impossible Nation: The Longing for Homeland in Canada and Quebec* (Stratford, Ontario, Canada: Mercury Press, 1996).

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priate as *their* (English) Canada — even if this has always been cleverly carried out by liberals from Québec! In accepting the liberal pretense that Quebeckers are nothing but another irksome minority, Gairdner ends up buying lock, stock and barrel the worst features of liberal ethnocentrism and cultural imperialism. Worse yet, he unwittingly turns into a footsoldier in the internationalist, liberal, and federalist[8] assault on Quebec.[9] A traditionalist critique of Quebec separatism must be an extension of the critique of Ottawa and its New Class, its nationalism, welfare-statism and its pretense of higher moral authority.

Notwithstanding these shortcomings, Gairdner has put together a very interesting and stimulating book touching on almost every important social and political issue confronting Canadian society. Yet the "higher ground" he wants to take turns out to be a swamp full of liberal mines ready to explode as soon as the critique ventures into practical solution. The tragedy with conservative thought today is precisely this: having long since yielded theoretical hegemony to liberalism, its insight are already pre-reintegrated into that system it wants to change. While Gairdner may be on "higher" ground, it is not at all clear that it is very solid. To be politically effective a truly radical critique of Canadian society needs to move to a theoretical ground much higher than Gairdner's liberal plateau.

Mark Wegierski

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8. Despite claims that Canada is the "loosest federation in history," in Canada the term "federalism" has come to mean the advocacy of a highly-centralized state engaged in managerial-therapeutic agendas seeking to obliterate other, more authentic expressions of popular will, which often take regionalist (and, in the case of Quebec, separatist) forms. Today in Canada "federalism" is understood in exactly the same way it is in the US (where it is counterposed to "states' rights," pejoratively mocked as a code for racism). It has nothing to do with the older, more traditional US notion of "federalism," which referred to as much local self-government as possible.

9. As Conlogue points out, the disdainful attitude of many English-Canadians for French Quebec might well arise from a concealed jealousy of the fact that Quebeckers are a true *people* (in the Herderian sense) whereas English-Canadians are actually fragmented in different regions with their own distinct identity and thus unable to coalesce into any *one* nation.

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From Communist Policy to "Affirmative Action"

Earl Ofari Hutchinson, *Blacks and Reds: Race and Class In Conflict, 1919-1990* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1995), 338+ viii pp.

Between 1989 and 1991 the Berlin Wall crumbled, the Soviet Union dissolved, communism collapsed and, allegedly, history ended. Although leaders in Havana, Hanoi, Beijing, and Pyongyang continue to sing "The Internationale," in the West the threat of communism is a thing of the past. History goes on, however, and so does that Enlightenment ideology of which communism was only the most extreme expression. Thus, it is not surprising that many of the "totalitarian" practices formerly associated with communism today reappear, even if in much milder versions, within liberal-democratic regimes — themselves the heirs of that same Enlightenment tradition. Nowhere is this more obvious than in race relations. If one compares American culture in the 1930s with that of the 1990s it is clear that the greatest changes have occurred in policies concerning race — policies which today turn out to be surprisingly similar to those deployed earlier by the communists. Racial segregation is finally gone, but the *way* it was abolished has exacted a high cultural price. Though this is not his objective, in his analysis of communist policies concening race relations Earl Ofari Hutchinson inadvertently helps to clarify just how close current policies resemble those followed by the Stalinists of a couple of generations ago.

Hutchinson is a nationally syndicated columnist and author of several books about blacks. In *Blacks and Reds*, he asks: "Were they [the communists] friends or foes of blacks? The truth is that at various times during the past half century they were both" (p. vii). He uses personal papers, FBI files, and interviews to supplement an extensive literature on the subject. He relates how, during the Depression, communists achieved some success in influencing black leaders and organizations (p. 1). The next decade, however, "brought division, near collapse, and the abandonment of [the communists'] lofty pronouncements on civil rights. The 1950s brought the bleak years of McCarthyite political repression and disarray. In the 1960s, the Communist Party searched for ways to become an effective player in the civil rights movement and the black power movements, but the doors were closed and their decline accelerated"(p. 2). Indeed, "The FBI in truth knew that communist influence within the civil rights organizations was nil" (p. 270). This is only partly true.

Though this book contains new information, there is a rushed, undigested quality about the product. Hutchinson fails to organize the material in a logical fashion and the the result is confusion. Thus his summary of relations between the NAACP and the communists during the campaign to save the Scottsboro boys

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jumps back and forth between the Party's third or ultra-Left phase of the early 1930s and the Popular Front period of the mid-to-late 1930s. He writes: "In 1934, the fragile alliance between [the NAACP and the communist-alligned International Labor Defense] broke apart" (p. 118). But many of the examples he cites for the collapse of that alliance had occurred in 1931 and 1932! His footnote (p. 133) refers to writing of 1931, then 1934, and 1931 again.[1] Similarly, he fails to relate the dates of defections from the CP to the Party's flip-flops, and to explain why people left the Party or the demoralization of those who remained.[2] When the Popular Front collapsed in August 1939, after Stalin signed the non-aggression pact with Hitler, American communists stopped caling for a united front against Nazism. Rather, they now advocated American neutrality: the avoidance of another imperialist war in which the US would be allied with the colonial powers — Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Then, in the summer of 1941, when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union, the American Party reversed itself again; demanding US entry into WWII. The colonial powers were now seen as democracies and potential allies. Though each particular position could be defended and had sizable support in the US, the flip-flops of the American communists, echoing Moscow's needs, cost the communists members and influence.

The Party's reversals also won the enmity of A. Philip Randolph, President of the National Negro Congress, who refused to be a staunch anti-fascist one day, and an ally of John L. Lewis, Charles Lindberg, and America First the next. Hutchinson fails to report a major consequence of the split between Randolph and the communists in the NNC. After he lost control of the NNC to the communists, the CIO, and the non-interventionists, Randolph formed his own organization — the March on

1. Occasionally Hutchinson simply distorts events outright, as when he quotes Herbert Aptheker's concession that during WWII "the Party's civil rights policy was 'pushed frequently far to excess'"(195). But Aptheker was saying just the opposite, complaining that the Party, in pursuing its priority to win the war against Hitler, had generally abandoned its civil rights militancy since it might have interfered with morale in the effort to win the war. In addition, the book is full of minor, irritating errors. Thus, e.g., the index is incomplete, and in it Jay Lovestone loses the final "e" on his name (p. 332). Hutchinson mentions a "ballot" by folk singer Woody Guthrie (p. 216). When writing about the Party in the 1930s, he fails to distinguish properly between John P. and Benjamin J. Davis, both blacks, both either red or close to it, but one active in the International Labor Defense, the other heading the National Negro Congress (e.g., p. 195). Similarly, Hutchinson notes that a black communist leader of the 1920s, Lovett Fort-Whiteman, wrote under the name of James Jackson (p. 46), but fails to distinguish that Jackson who died in poverty in the Soviet Union from a later James Jackson who would be a black party leader after WWII. Indeed, Hutchinson links the two in the index. The Southern Conference Educational Fund is misidentified as the Southern Education Fund (p. 267). More bothersome is Hutchinson's habit of having a footnote contain four citations to cover the previous two or three paragraphs, often leaving unclear the source of a specific quotation or assertion.

2. Thus, during the Popular Front era in the 1930s, the hey-day of American communism, some blacks in the Party in Alabama felt betrayed by the communists' attempt to appease liberals. Hutchinson generally ignores this critique from the Left.

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Washington Movement. In the early 1940s, he threatened FDR with a massive march on the Capitol unless the President decreed a fair employment policy (an FEPC) in the expanding defense industries. Most important, to prevent communists from entering his MOWM and ward off their influence, Randolph barred all whites. Hutchinson should have been more careful in his comments. He writes, "In April 1948 NAACP officials launched their own anti-communist crusade by publicly reaffirming their political 'nonpartisan status.' This move was clearly aimed at the left-leaning Henry Wallace third-party presidential movement. . . .The board feared that any identification with the Progressive party candidate's message . . . would scare Truman Democrats away from supporting the organization's civil rights program" (201-202). But that hardly betokens a "nonpartisan status." Indeed, the featured speaker at the NAACP conference of 1948 was President Harry Truman, the Democratic candidate, and in September of that year the NAACP board fired Du Bois because of his endorsement of Wallace.[3]

Over the decades the Party would continue to push incompatible policies on race. In the 1980s, Gus Hall declared: "The struggle against racism has emerged as a requisite for working-class unity and people's victories" (p. 296). However, "while they [Party leaders] issued ringing declarations in support of affirmative action, they knew that most white workers were opposed to it. They had to figure out how to convince white Party members, many of whom belonged to trade unions and were sensitive to the feelings of white workers, to support affirmative action" (p. 297). What Hutchinson fails to explore is the similarity of the American policy of affirmative action with the Stalinist solution to minority questions — a solution implemented throughout Eastern Europe before the collapse of communism.[4]

Hutchinson claims that the Party influence on the civil rights movement was negligible. He barely mentions the Southern Negro Youth Conference, which rallied young blacks in the segregated South in the late 1930s and 40s. He ignores the Progressive Party campaign of 1948, in which Henry Wallace, his running mate Sen. Glen Taylor of Idaho, and Paul Robeson all appeared in the South and fought

3. Along with many others, Hutchinson distorts an important campaign of the 1930s. He writes: "In December 1933, Mussolini used the pretext of a border clash . . . to invade Ethiopia" (p. 144). Actually, he did not invade until October 1935. At that time, allegdly, communist Party leaders "even shared the stage with Randolph, Garveyites and black ministers in massive, 'Hands Off Ethiopia' rallies . . ." (p. 145). This is not entirely accurate. While Garvey did oppose the Italians when the fighting began, he became ever more critical of and "frequently denounced [Ethiopian Emperor] Haile Selassie." Moreover, Garvey, long deported from the US, had retained his fierce anti-communism into the 1930s. He admired other leading anti-communists, such as Mussolini. Indeed, in 1937 Garvey proudly proclaimed of his Universal Negro Improvement Association, "We were the first fascists." See J. A. Rogers, *World's Great Men of Color* (New York: J. A. Rogers, 1947), Vol. II, pp. 602, 605. While many liberals are the first to hurl the word "fascist" at those with whom they disagree, they usually ignore the fascism of blacks, even when publicly advocated. See my "White Liberals, Black Racists," in *Chronicles* (August, 1994), pp. 43-46.

4. See my "The Case Against Affirmative Action," in *Telos* 93 (Fall 1992).

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against segregation policies at campaign rallies.[5] In Louisiana, a Young Progressive student Ben Smith would sit outside with a baseball bat to protect a residence where Wallace stayed.[6] In October 1963 in New Orleans, Smith was one of the three "subversives" arrested by the Louisiana Un-American Activities Committee.[7] The Progressives had practically created a civil rights movement before *the* "movement."

When the "official" civil rights movement rose, names linked to the Progressive Party reappear. In the struggle for school integration in Little Rock, former Progressive Daisy Bates was one of the militant integrationists. Also, when a black student at Central High was assaulted, another former Progressive, a white woman, rushed to the girl's aid to help fend off the mob. When every liberal organization from the ACLU to the NAACP required anti-communist declarations (and members of their boards were informing the FBI about radicals in their own ranks), a few institutions in the South rejected such anti-communism, permitting communists to join and partake as any other citizens. One such institution was Highlander Folk School in Tennessee. In Montgomery, Alabama, in the 1950s

5. At one such rally, in Birmingham in 1948, Sheriff Eugene "Bull" Connor, who would become notorious in the early 1960s for unleashing dogs on black demonstrators, had Sen. Glen Taylor arrested when the Progressive candidate entered through a door reserved for blacks to address the Southern Negro Youth Conference.

6. Smith would later become an attorney, join the radical National Lawyers Guild and become a member of the board of the Southern Conference Education Fund. Smith would also handle civil rights cases in Mississippi in the early 1960s despite the opposition of the anti-radical NAACP. One of his cases, *Greenwood v. Peacock*, would be decided 5-4 in the US Supreme Court. Had the decision gone the other way, the entire US judicial system would have been greatly altered.For the presentation of argument before the Supreme Court, see *New York Times* (April 27, 1966); for the courts ruling, *ibid.* (June 21, 1966), p. 31. Arthur Krock editorialized about the case in the *New York Times* (June 21, 1966), p. 42.

7. This case went to the Supreme Court, where Dombrowsky, Smith, and Walzer were exonerated. In 1948 in Shreveport, a landlady demanded immediate eviction of her tenants when she heard Robeson was visiting them. The police informed her she would have to wait till the end of the month. In Texas, Young Progressives picketed a segregated movie theater. In New Orleans in 1949, over 60 people were arrested at a residence because the Young Progressives were conducting an integrated party. In his memoirs, Carl Bernstein recalls partaking in a Progressive lunch-counter sit-in in Baltimore when he was a child in the early 1950s.Carl Bernstein, *Loyalties: A Son's Memoir* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989). Bernstein's father defended many government employees accused before security panels. The son would become world-famous as a reporter investigating the Watergate burglary. His memoirs also describe his childhood endeavors sitting-in at lunch counters in the Baltimore area with Progressives during the Cold War era. For additional material on Progressive Party civil rights activities in the South, see Curtis C. MacDougall, *Gideon's Army*, 3 vols. (New York: Marzani & Munzell, 1963) Vol. II, pp. 400, 406-407, Vol. III, pp. 741-44; see also my "Change in the South," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* (Summer 1988), pp. 119-36; and two recent volumes describe a fuller arc of civil rights activities in the South from the New Deal through the late 1940s: John Egerton, *Speak Now Against the Day: The Generation before the Civil Rights Movement in the South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994) and Patricia Sullivan, *Days of Hope: Race and Democracy in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

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black activist Rosa Parks made contact with Progressive Virginia Durr. With Durr's backing, Parks attended Highlander Folk School, where part of the training was to resist segregation. The school's theme song, "We Will Overcome," was slightly altered by Progressive Pete Seeger to become the anthem of the civil rights movement, "We Shall Overcome." Parks returned to Alabama and engaged in a bus protest that galvanized the black community into a boycott of the bus system. Martin Luther King, Jr. became the spokesman for the boycott. In 1957, he too was studying protest methods at Highlander. There, a famous photograph showed King seated beside prominent communist Abner Berry. Segregationists in the Georgia Bureau of Investigation used the photo with the headline claiming King had attended a communist training school. The point is that in the mid-1950s, when most Americans were clearly avoiding the Left, the civil rights movement embraced people who were former Progressives, if not present communists.[8]

In King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference, one official was Jack O'Dell, who had been and may still have been a member of the Party. One of King's chief advisors was Stanley Levison, a former Party member, whom the FBI suspected of being still a secret member of the Party *and* a source of hidden funds for the Party. It was the FBI taps on Levison's telephone conversations that prompted their interest in King.[9] Such radical presence may explain some of the crucial events of the mid-1960s. Consider the Black Power upsurge in the 1960s. The trend in various civil rights organizations to expel whites was in reality *also* an attempt to expel reds. Most historians of the subject are wrong in maintaining that what occurred in SNCC and the other civil rights organizations were instances of *radical* blacks purging *liberal* whites. On the contrary, it was *nationalist* blacks expelling *radical* whites; it was racism combined with McCarthyism. Indeed, some of the "radical," anti-white, black militants may have been working

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8. Junius Scales, who went to prison for his underground work for the Communist Party, wrote of travelling to Montgomery in the 50s where he was delighted to discover that one of the protest leaders was a member of the Party. Scales did not identify that member.Junius Scales and Richard Nickson, with a foreword by Telford Taylor, *Cause at Heart: A Former Communist Remembers* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987).

9. As Robin Kelley put it: "Of course, any effort to uncover direct links between the CP and the modern civil rights movement would be futile and might reinforce stereotypes of communists as conspirators. But to deny any linkages whatsoever ignores a twenty-year legacy of radicalism that had touched thousands of Alabamians." See Robin G. D. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1989), p. 229. Kelley's conclusions concerning Alabama can be readily extended to the whole South. See also Kenneth O'Reilley, "The FBI and the Civil Rights Movement . . ." in *Journal of Southern History* (May 1988), p. 213; also his *Racial Matters: The FBI's Secret File on Black America, 1960-1972* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), p. 85. On how the FBI's interest in Levison led to the FBI's taps on King, see David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1986), pp. 303-304; Michael Friedly with David Gallen, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: The FBI File* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., 1993), pp. 20-43.

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with government authorities to expel radical whites.[10] Purging whites to purge reds had been the ploy that A. Philip Randolph had used in the early 1940s to prevent communist influence in his MOWM. This approach was revived to curtail left-wing influence in the civil rights movement. Hutchinson's conclusion that the CP had no influence on the civil rights movement is contrary to fact.[11]

On the other hand, writing about 1945, Hutchinson is right in claiming that "Party leaders were trapped in a contradiction. They insisted on a color-blind party and a color-blind revolution. Yet, Party practices and actions subtly reinforced racial differences by making color an all-consuming issue within the Party" (pp. 223-24). While "it was not unusual for whites to be leaders of Party locals working exclusively in black communities . . . to many blacks, the prospect of whites leading blacks was not appealing." After WWII, pressure from blacks within the Party sought to change this. The leadership complied and "on the surface, [it] gave the appearance that rank was based on merit, not color" (p. 224). Some of those changes took the form of the Party's renewed war against "white chauvinism" and "Negro nationalism" (p. 225). Here is where Hutchinson makes one of his most important contributions. His account of the application of Stalin's approach to minorities inside the CPUSA comes across as very similar to current practices.

The main changes in the Party occurred in 1930-31 when the Comintern stressed that the American Party should seek to recruit blacks. In 1931 a CP front, the International Labor Defense would lead the defense of the Scottsboro boys against a charge of raping two young white women aboard a train in Alabama. Almost simultaneously, the CP began to crack down on "racism" inside the Party. One of the first to feel the brunt of this new policy was August Yokinen, a Finnish immigrant, party member, and janitor at a Finnish club-hall in Harlem. When one weekend three black party members entered a dance there, the crowd hushed, the music stilled, and the blacks decided to leave before a fight erupted. Later, Party functionaries questioned various members as to why they had failed to protect the black comrades. Yokinen's response was considered unsatisfactory. Shortly thereafter, the CP charged Yokinen with racism. He was to have a public trial, with a jury of seven whites and seven blacks, all reds, conducted before an audience of 1500 in the Harlem Casino. In short, it was a mild American version of what shortly thereafter came to be known as "show trial." The purpose was to show the general public that the CP would fight against racism and make it a crime. For party members, the trial was to make them sensitive to how they treated blacks. Yokinen was found guilty and assigned special Party tasks to fight for Negro rights. Later in 1931, the US immigration department sought to deport him because he had been a communist.

10. See, for instance, Clayborne Carson, "Civil Rights Reform and the Black Freedom Struggle," in Charles W. Eagles, ed., *The Civil Rights Movement* (Jackson and London: University Press of Mississippi, 1986), pp. 19-32, especially p. 28.

11. See my "Change in the South," in *Journal of Ethnic Studies*, pp. 119-36; my review of Kim Rogers book in *Louisiana History* (Spring 1994), pp. 232-36; and my dispute with Stephen Whitfield, in *Society* (Jul.-Aug. 1995), pp. 10-11.

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Hutchinson stresses how the party conducted a number of American-style show trails for racism in the early 1930s, during which members of the Party were expelled. However, with its opening toward socialists, democrats and liberals, the Popular Front also softened the Party's anti-racist attitudes. After WWII and the growing split between Truman and Stalin, the Party decided to renew its internal crusade against racism. Public trails of communists accused of racism at the height of the Cold War became once again appropriate. So there were secret, internal trials. Any type of remark could be interpreted as racist, and was. Even Junius Scales wrote of a new attitude inside the Party: by 1950 a white could not criticize a black Party member. Hutchinson provides examples of these activities from the 1930s, from the Cold War and beyond. What is surprising is the extent to which the ethos inside the CP during the 1930s resembles the ethos of contemporary, "liberal" America.[12]

The CP was clearly pc long before today's universities. Hutchinson provides an insightful account of the Party's predicament. In the early 1970s, the Party considered another internal crusade against racism. "But could they? Were they too shell-shocked by the internal Party battles against 'white chauvinism' in the 1930s and 1950s that had left their legacy of bitterness and division among Communists?" (p. 290). Still, in 1975 A. F. and G. W. were members of the Young Workers Liberation League, another incarnation of the Young Communist League. When these two young white males criticized the leadership of their YWLL, they were quickly charged with "anti-leadership tendencies." As almost

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12. To emphasize how revolutionary was the communist approach to combatting racism inside the Party, *and how common it is today*, a quote from Hutchinson may suffice. In the early 1930s: "In the wake of the Yokinen trial, many white Party members walked on eggshells. They knew that one wrong word or a furtive glance at a black might send them to the defendant's docket, and no one wanted to be another Yokinen. As always, there were slow learners. Joe Burns, a lowly Party worker in Brooklyn, had to sit for five hours at the Harlem Casino and listen to the communist 'prosecutor' accuse him of every act of racism imaginable. Burns was on trial for getting into a shoving match with Maude White, a black Party member. During the heated exchange between the two, Burns allegedly shouted that 'Negro workers do not show any appreciation for all we have done for them.' Burns was found guilty and placed on probation for six months. In May 1932 three whites who were members of the Young Communist League found themselves on 'trial.' They belonged to the Amil Athletic Club in Detroit and the club barred blacks. The Party chose a judge, prosecutor and a mixed jury of black and white workers. The trio were quickly found guilty of 'acts against the working class' and expelled. A leading communist organizer in New Jersey thought 'it was purely a personal matter' when his daughter declined to dance with a black man at an International Labor Defense dance in July 1932. After he was called on the carpet by Party investigators, he pleaded that he was in 'the habit of talking with Negroes.' The next month he had a chance to do more talking when he was brought before a people's court. He was accused of being in 'agreement with the Southern landlords and bosses' and drummed out of the Party" (pp. 65-66). "Whether the Party ran out of steam, lost too many members, or the mass trials had simply outlived their usefulfess, the 1933 Party leaders decided to put a stop to show trials. . . . Even though the campaign was shelved, whites were on notice that they were still accountable for any racial misbehavior" (p. 67).

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all the leaders in the organization were minorities, at their trial the cry of "racism" was frequently hurled. They were expelled later in 1975.[13]

Today, in the new US, racism has become, if not the only crime, the *major* crime. Watching the media's response to the O. J. trial, it is clear they find Fuhrman's use of the "n" word worse than the likelihood that a black, former football star had murdered two white people. More recently, at Texaco, hiring possibly lesser qualified blacks to achieve affirmative action goals and timetables was judged insufficient. The corporation had its sensitivity training sessions (brainwashing, including communal confessionals almost identical to those that had been perfected decades earlier by the CPs in the USSR, China, etc.). A few whites at Texaco, unconvinced by the sessions, but certain that some of their black colleagues had not been promoted because of their lack of ability, made jokes about the black jelly beans sticking to the bottom of the bag. The jelly bean phrase had been used at the sensitivity sessions. But outside the sessions they laughed, and they may have used the "n" word. A colleague taped them, gave it to the media, and the show trial had begun. But this show trial was conducted not

13. Clearly, to remain in the CP, one had to be pc. After WWII the Party began another internal campaign against racism. "During the summer of 1952, the grumbles from black and white Party members began to grow louder. The campaign against racism and [black] nationalism was fast sinking into a quagmire of pettiness. At one meeting, Eslanda Robeson saw two young black women chattering noisily. A white woman, who was a long-term Party stalwart, turned and told the women to shut up. The meeting broke up in a pandemonium when the young blacks accused her of being a white chauvinist. Siding with the two women, the chairman severely reprimanded the woman for her alleged racist act and kicked her out of the meeting. Robeson could not believe it. 'Now I submit, this was carrying things too far.' The floodgates were opening. In every district, Party members told tales of woe about being harassed for saying or even thinking something that was contrary to the Party's view. [Dorothy] Healey recalls the damaging impact a minor incident had on one Party member: 'This one white comrade served coffee to a black member in a cracked cup. Next thing she knew she was being brought up on charges of being a racist. She was censured. Now how can anybody defend themselves against that?' Harry Haywood [a black communist] asked what it was all accomplishing. It smacked to him of an intramural match where victory was determined by how many members were disciplined or expelled. . . . The Party needed to stop 'psychoanalyzing' itself, Haywood said, and get on with the serious business of building mass struggle around these issues. His anger may have been due less to ideology than the way in which the Party had treated his wife. Belle, who was white, was a cashier at the Party's Jefferson School. During one lunchtime, she mistakenly gave a black student the wrong change. When the student questioned her she casually pointed to his hand and asked him to show her the change. A minor mishap that might have passed unnoticed suddenly became a major act of racism. Belle was summoned before the district and charged. . . . It took eight months before she was finally 'cleared.' Years later Haywood, after he quit the Party, bitterly called the campaign the 'Party's phony war against white chauvinism.' More Party leaders agreed with him. Scapegoating the Belles of the Party was self-defeating and stupid. . . . By 1953 (communist leader William Z.] Foster was ready to call a halt . . . Foster ridiculed the way whites were required to talk. White members, he said, were forbidden to say 'boy,' 'girl,' 'black,' 'dark,' or even 'blackmail'" (pp. 231-32).

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by communists in the 1930s but by capitalists in the 1990s. In both sets of trials, the main charge, the main crime, was racism. Like the earlier communist trials, the one at Texaco was also rigged. Since the corporation had to eradicate any hint of racism, that meant firing the whites who had used offensive terms. They had almost no chance to present their case. No wonder Jesse Jackson and his colleagues are often members of the board of those corporations! Thus, the irony: truly privileged white males are aligned with and subsidize the New Class in promoting affirmative action, quota hiring, sensitivity training, diversity, etc.

Though many factors have contributed to this state of affairs, the most important was the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, whose sponsors promised to usher in a new era of equal opportunity in which discrimination based on race, religion, or gender was prohibited. But New Class lawyers and bureaucrats in the EEOC immediately set out to subvert the civil rights law. Alleging institutional racism, in which the higher proportion of white men in better jobs proved discrimination and "white, male privilege," the bureaucrats turned the law on its head. Soon, they ruled that the law required discrimination against whites and males until quotas for minorities and women were met. Under Nixon, possibly the most liberal President since WWII, there was a massive expansion of the EEOC, and quotas (under the names of "goals" and "timetables") to other preferred minorities: Asians, Hispanics, "Native Americans."[14]

Through the EEOC and related agencies, the New Class' long march through the institutions had begun. The EEOC provided them the engine to place commissars —affirmative action officers — in every personnel office in the land. To outlaw discrimination, the Civil Rights Act was converted into regulations to forbid "racism" and "sexism." If a firm did not discriminate in hiring and promotion, the result was often fewer minorities or women hired and promoted; that corporation could then be sued and fined in the millions for discrimination! In the name of a law to end discrimination, discrimination in favor of minorities and women was therefore required. Equal opportunity no longer applied to white men. Corporate factories retooled to emerge as animal farms in which all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others. By 1979, the EEOC under Eleanor Holmes Norton sued Sears for sexual discrimination because the wrong percentage of women had been promoted. The EEOC lost the case, but won the war. The Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department has become the largest specialty law firm in the US. Sears defended itself against the government's charges of sexism. It won in court. But the cost of the law suit was so exorbitant that a few more such victories would have led to bankruptcy. Most corporations, calculating the results, decided thereafter to negotiate with the EEOC rather than challenge it. Norton, having lost in court, won in every board room in the nation. The US government had more resources than any corporation, and the EEOC would use the

14. The US is the only country in which people born in it must prove some 25 generations in North America before being declared "natives."

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government's resources to require quotas throughout the land.

Over decades, American communists carved an impressive record in the promotion of equal rights for black people in the US. The CP accomplished this systematically beginning in the early 1930s when few other political groups were interested. For a rather small, fringe political organization, the communists and their allies demonstrated courage, determination and skill, while achieving specific victories. They won equal rights struggles in lower courts and in the Supreme Court through street demonstrations and leafletting, through newspapers, magazines and the theater. They even conducted a small march on Washington in 1933. Moreover, the Party encouraged black writers and artists like Langston Hughes and Richard Wright, while simultaneously urging research into black history by white authors such as Herbert Aptheker and Howard Fast. That is an enviable record.

However, there were major contradictions in the Stalinist approach to racial matters. The main contradiction is that in the fight for black equality whites were *not* to treat blacks as equals. Whites could criticize other whites, give a white comrade coffee in a chipped cup, question the amount of change in a white customer's hand, or decline to dance with a fellow white. But if a white did the same to a black, that white might be accused of racism, face humiliation and possible expulsion from the Party. Hutchinson's book exposes how this double standard began in the 1930s and continued, on and off, for decades. Thus, what began as a struggle for equality became institutionalized inequality — blacks could criticize whites, but whites dared not challenge blacks, particularly on a racially charged issue. Gradually, other "progressive" groups adopted similar pc policies on race.

Later, this phenomenon spread to the larger American society. For example, the Civil Rights Movement was a movement for equal rights and treatment. King's speech at the 1963 March on Washington summarized the dreams of that movement — that his children be judged by their character and not by the color of their skin. But that "dream" was shattered in the late 1960s with the eclipse of the Civil Rights Movement by Black Nationalists. To them, skin color *was* character. By the early 1970s, most of the leaders of the "civil rights movement" had rejected its earlier ideals; they had become Black Nationalists in civil rights clothing. Equal treatment was suddenly anathema; special treatment for blacks (and women and Hispanics) was demanded. The newer "civil rights movement" no longer believed in civil rights for white men, but demanded preferences, privileges, and set-asides for minorities and women. Indeed, equal treatment was now met with cries of "discrimination." Essential to providing this pc approach the sanction of government were the social democrats inside the EEOC. They succeeded, using the issue of race, in turning what had earlir been the Stalinist ethos into American policy.

Hugh Murray

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Post-1989 Socialism?

Donald Clark Hodges, *America's New Economic Order* (Brookfield, Vermont Ashgate Publishing Co., 1998), 192 + xi pp.

Donald Clark Hodges' newest book testifies to his confused reaction to the dizzying development of the managerial state since mid-century. Though he claims to be a disciple of James Burnham and dedicates his work to his "teacher and mentor . . . before he became a cold warrior," Hodges is clearly more of a nostalgic Marxist than a Burnhamite. Indeed, Hodges' description of Burnham's post-WWII descent into anti-Communist perdition is full of errors. Contrary to Hodges' assertions, Burnham did not become an "intellectual precursor of neoconservatism," — a view discredited in Samuel T. Francis' biography of Burnham, which Hodges cites in his bibliography. Despite Burnham's view that a managerialized regime and economy were historically unavoidable, he did not share the neoconservative faith in global democracy or human rights. Burnham viewed both of them as mere instruments for the expansion of managerial power. In 1974 he engaged in a debate with Peter Berger in *National Review* on the transferability of Western ideologies to non-Western cultures. Burnham saw no moral value in undertaking this project and mocked the use of decontextualized abstractions as a stand-in for the Western heritage.

Regrettably, Hodges cannot bring himself to recognize that "class-struggle" and "social struggle" are historically passé. Though he insists that the "Marxist formulation is out," he nonetheless exhibits second thoughts about it. Allegedly, neoliberals "have turned their backs on the poor and homeless," workers have been "seduced" by consumer goods, and a "working-class aristocracy" is oppressing those on the bottom. Hodges never documents any of these claims. Is it a neoconservative-neoliberal fantasy to believe that "too much government has become the reigning problem, too much federal spending, regulation, and bureaucracy"?

Such an assertion could be easily attributed to Burnham, though Burnham might have added that such a trend would continue to grow because of managerial hegemony. Nor would Burnham, either before or after he became a Cold Warrior, have countenanced Hodges' dirge: that we are now living with "socialism for the rich not the poor, the socialism of the corporations rather than of organized labor, the socialism of the technostructure, not of the New Left, much less the Old." For Burnham, the corporate state and corporate economy dovetailed, but not in a way to favor any traditional capitalist class. It was social and commercial planners who took over, partly by appealing to class resentments and partly by

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emphasizing rationality and efficiency. This strategy of control, as Hodges recognizes, has nothing to do with reviving the free market, though Burnham's managerial class may tolerate market incentives to determine aggregate demand and to increase material production. Moreover, the managerial class does not decide necessarily in favor of big wealth as against organized labor. It may use both, as in fascist Italy or in "welfare-state democracies," to consolidate managerial rule.

From the viewpoint of a qualified Burnhamite, it seems that Hodges is looking for a prototype for his own nostalgic, misguided Marxism. The author of *The Managerial Revolution* had ceased to be a Trotskyist by 1940, and though Burnham had examined bureaucratic structures after absorbing Trotsky's critique of derailed Soviet socialism, his analysis did not presuppose a Marxist understanding of history. In Burnham's case, there is an explicit denial that socialism or capitalism remains relevant for understanding political change. Burnham would have laughed at Hodges' compulsive returning to spilt milk, as seen in his jammering about "oppressed American workers" and "unleashed capitalist greed." Burnham would have seen neither in managerial America but rather the proof of bureaucratic ascendancy, as witnessed by an expanded public sector, government social policy and the reduction of democracy to public administration.

Curiously, the most glaring case in recent years of collaboration between big government and big business does not interest Hodges at all — the mass migration of Third World unskilled labor into the US that has occurred since the Immigration Act of 1965. In *The Case Against Immigration?* a self-avowed labor union advocate, Roy Beck, demonstrates the diminishing effect on workers' earnings, particularly at the bottom of the wage scale, caused by the tens of millions of Third World immigrants, mostly from Latin America. Beck paints a bleak picture of collusion between public administrators and journalists, eager to reconstruct the social and cultural identities of the great unwashed, and businessmen in search of inexhaustible cheap labor. Beck also documents the cost of this unpopular immigration wave in terms of added crime and social services; but notes that these are distributed costs for which corporate wealth contributes relatively little. Although Hodges rails against the "transnational system of the multinationals," never does he bring up the embarrassing point that the current Left's advocacy of "multiculturalism" feeds into that system without being entirely reducible to its influence.

On one point at least, Hodges does have it right, i.e., that an economic technostructure operates as part of the managerial state which stands in opposition to a "market system of small and medium-sized, individually and family owned enterprises." This technostructure represents the American economic side of a bureaucratic world order, and in return for its support of the globalist and therapeutic policies of the managerial state, e.g., the banning of "hate-speech," minority quotas, and feminist indoctrination, the technostructure is given political assistance: human rights campaigns that help it penetrate new markets and

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governmentally-negotiated free trade agreements. Hodges fails to note, however, that these agreements are not only economic but political and ideological. As in the case of NAFTA, they introduce minority quotas, sexual-harassment measures, and other aspects of the therapeutic managerialism now triumphant in the US into other cultures and economies. Here, too, the analytic problem is an excessively limited perspective. Hodges is right that the projected world order will and may even now contain a system of multinationals, but it also makes room for considerably more than a disappointed Marxist may be willing to notice.

Hodges illustrates a tendency that Carl Schmitt associated almost exclusively with bourgeois liberals: "the avoidance of the political." Schmitt meant not only a lack of bellicosity on the part of the bourgeoisie but its unwillingness to grasp the operation of power in human affairs. This came from the predominant liberal belief that the most significant relations are material and that one can harmonize them by introducing sound economic rules. Though a socialist of some sort, Hodges seems to believe the same and never quite perceives that managerialism has to do with the control of people and making friend-enemy distinctions as well as with material greed. Hodges apparently thinks that socialism was somehow derailed, and if humanitarian economic planning could be carried out, all the social ills he complains about would presumably go away — or at least be alleviated. Never does he contemplate the possibility that socialism in practice is a more oppressive version of managerial exploitation. It aggrandizes managerial rule with less prosperity and gives to political elites even more of the same power than they presently exercise. It may surprise Hodges to learn, as it did Simonides in Xenophon's "Hiero," that "tyrants receive honors because they are feared" and "subjects rise in the presence of those they hate." For Hodges, such truths matter less than do socialist gripes about foul profits.

Paul Gottfried

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